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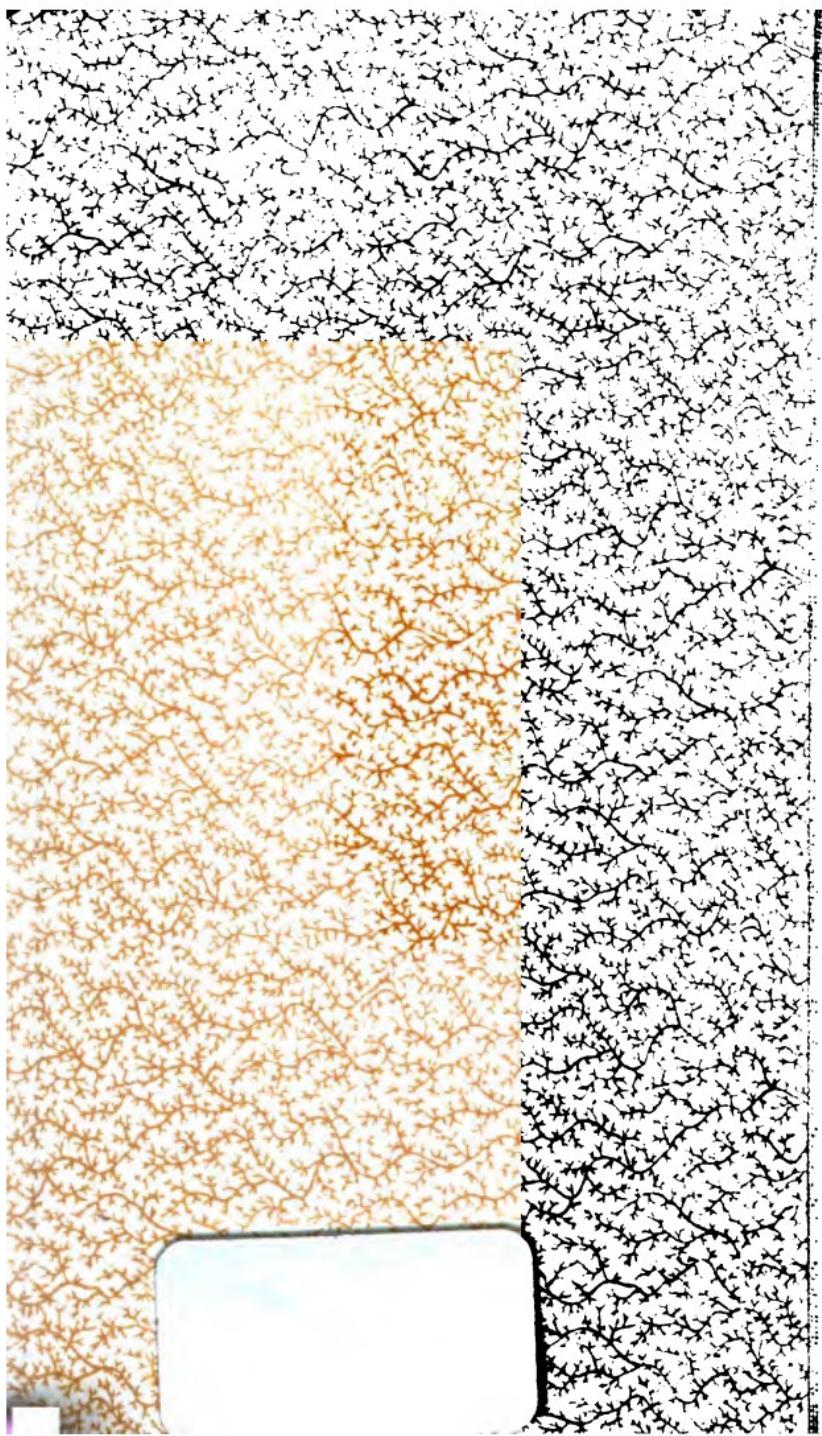
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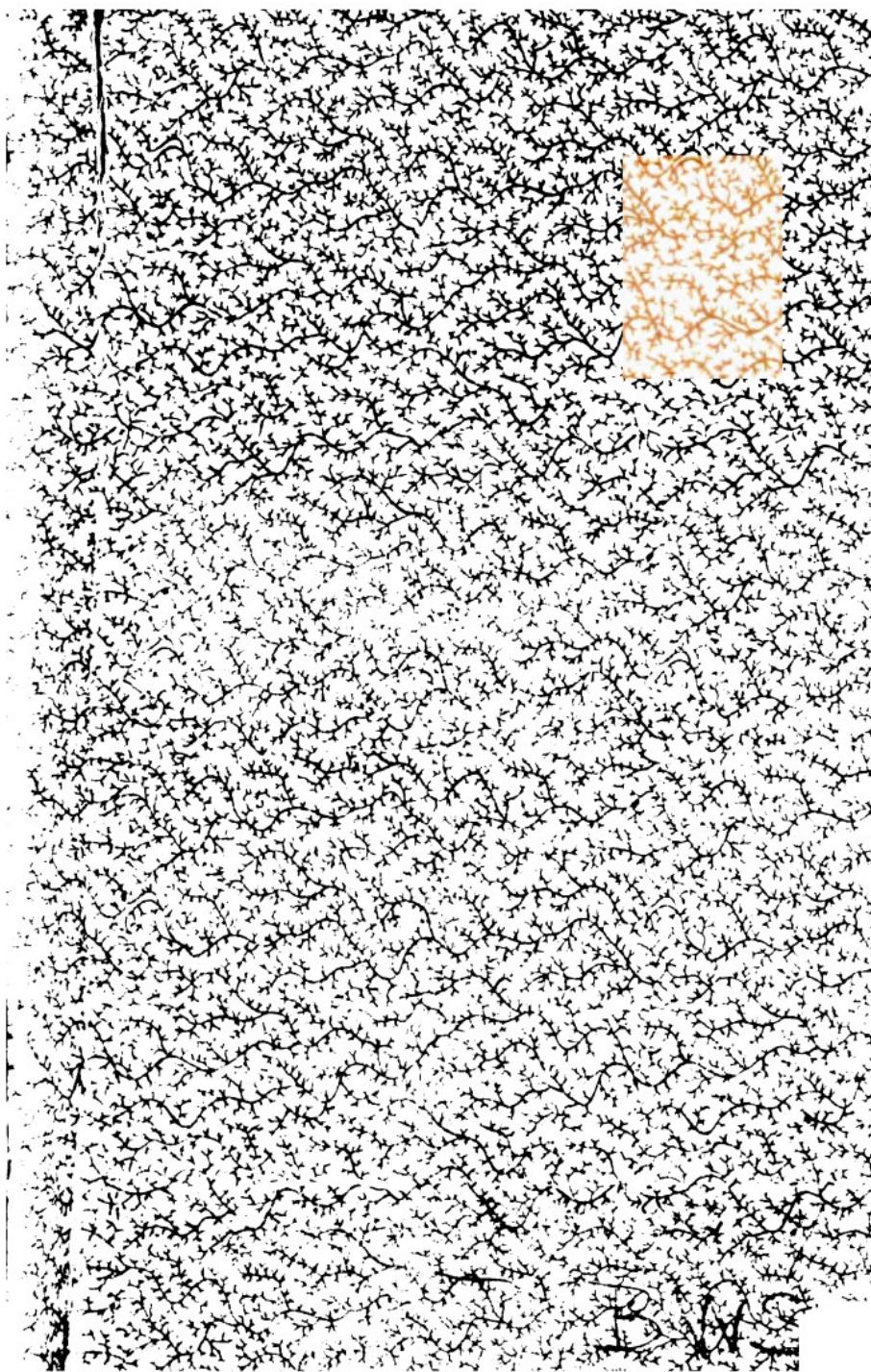
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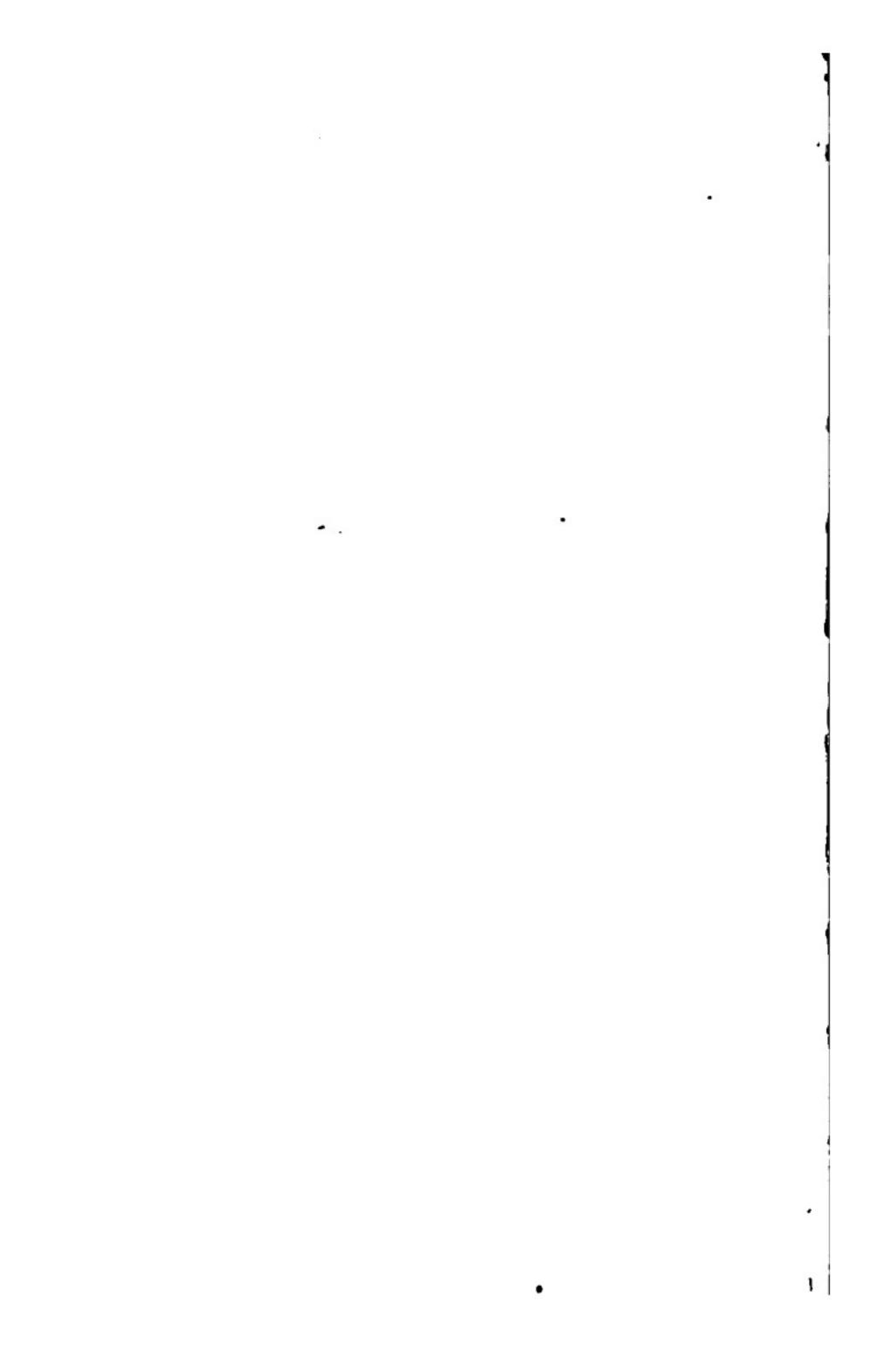
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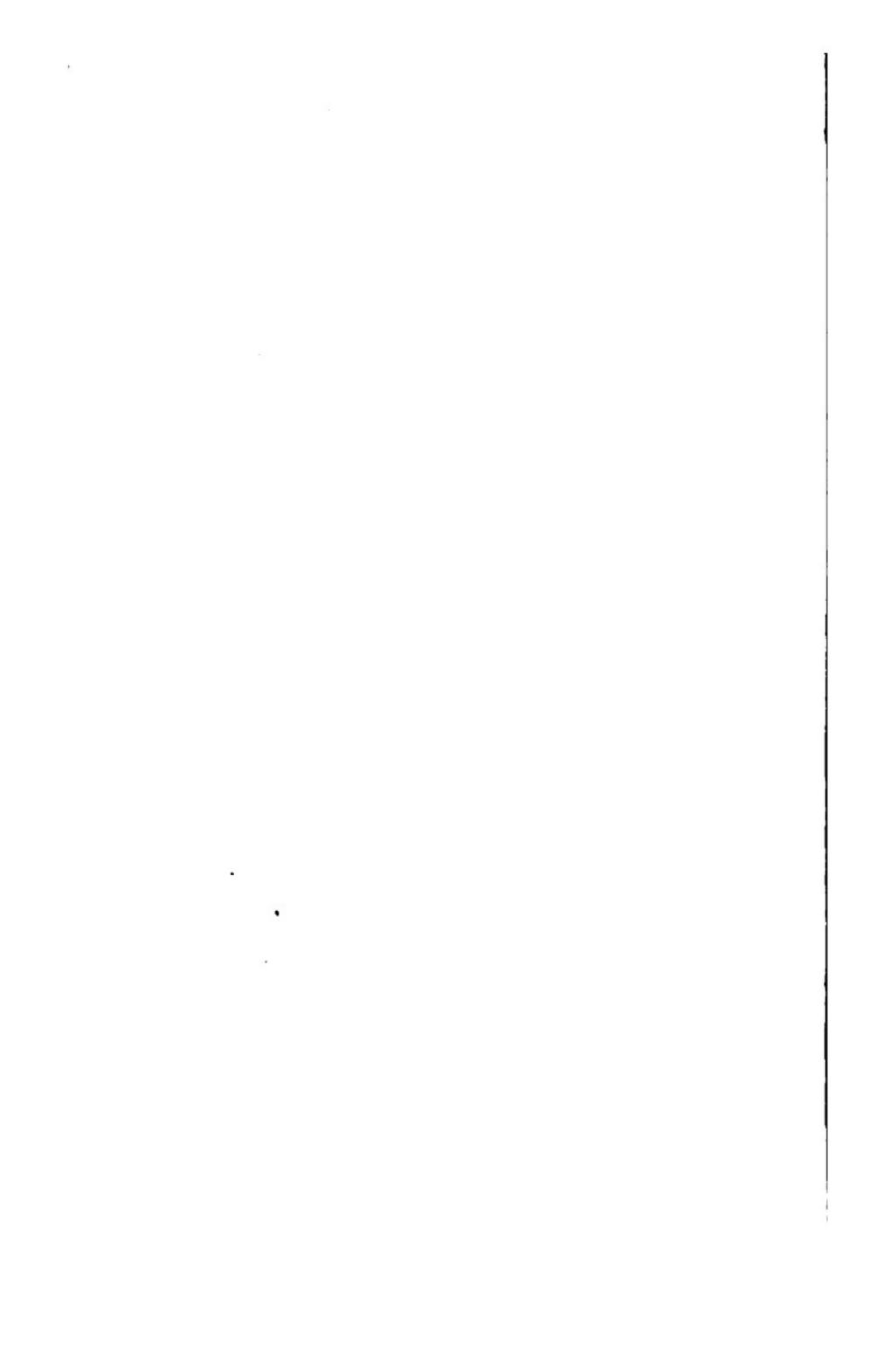
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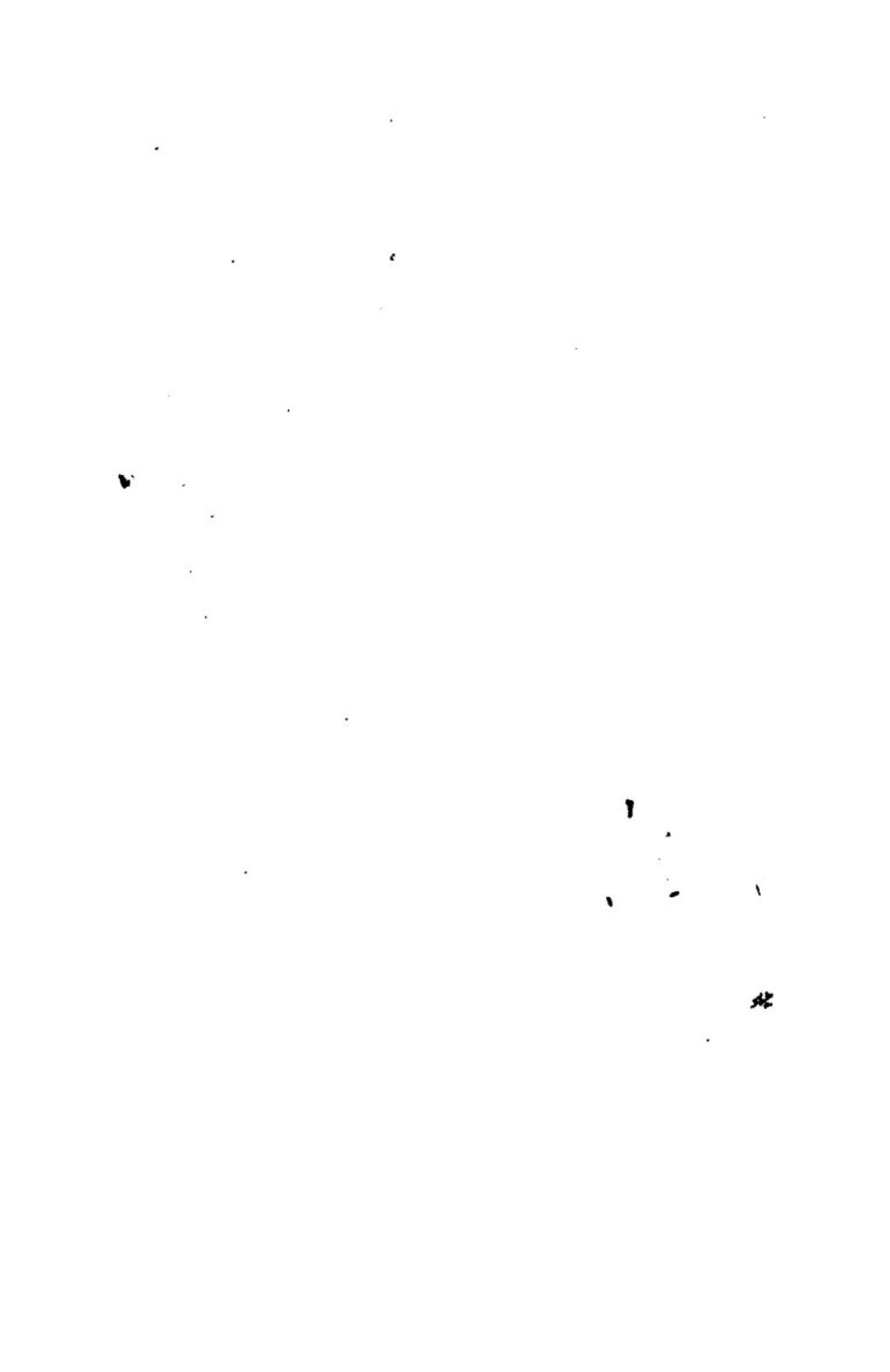
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SKETCHES

EVERY

VENETIAN HISTORY.

BY J. H. HARPER,
LITERARY

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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BY
CHARLES

LEWIS
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IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

CHARLES LEWIS

CHARLES LEWIS

NEW-YORK:

PUBLISHED BY HARPER & BROTHERS,
NO. 82 CLIFF-STREET.

1837.

C. L. H.

WANNA
SILVER
WANNA

TO

ONE

BY WHOSE SUGGESTION

THE FOLLOWING PAGES HAVE BEEN WRITTEN,

BY WHOSE REVISION

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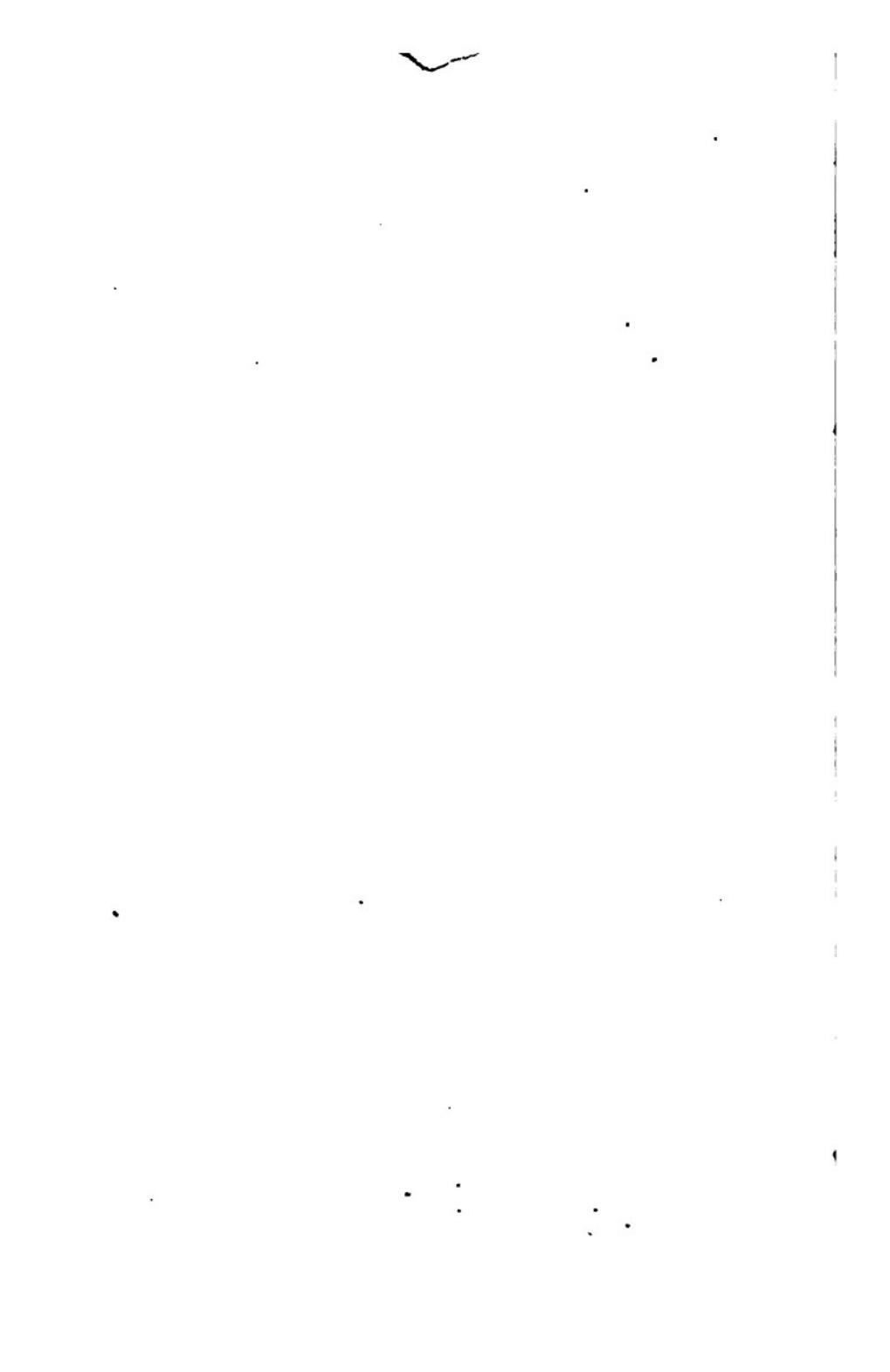
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A 9

THE END OF THE WORLD

THE copious use made in these volumes of the great works of M. Simonde de Sismondi, and the late Comte Daru, will be apparent in almost every page; and, indeed, no approach to Venetian History can be fittingly attempted save under their guidance. Nevertheless, in truth, it is much rather from the authorities to which those distinguished writers point, than from themselves, that the following narrative has been framed. All such of those authorities as were accessible have been diligently and accurately consulted; and it is hoped that a gleanings of characteristic incidents has occasionally been found among them, which may still be new to all excepting those who have explored for themselves the treasures of the Italian chroniclers.

London, January, 1831.



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II. MARCELLO TEGALIANO.

726

III. FABRICIAZIO URSE—massacred, and the dogeship abolished.

787

{ Annual Maestri Della Milizia.

to

742

DOGES RESTORED.

742

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755

V. GALLA—deposed and deprived of sight.

756

VI. DOMINICO MONTEARIO—deposed and deprived of sight.

- A.D.
- | | | | |
|------|---------|---|------------|
| 764 | VII. | MAURIZIO GALBAIO—associates his son GIOVANNI GALBAIO, singly,—as- | |
| 779 | VIII. | sociates his son MAURIZIO GALBAIO II. | { deposed. |
| 804 | IX. | OBELERIO ANTENORE — associ- ates his brothers BEATO ANTENORE, VALENTINO ANTENORE, | { deposed |
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| — | XXX. | DOMINICO FLARENIGO. | |

| A. D. | | |
|-------|----------|--------------------------------|
| 1041 | XXXI. | Dominico Contarini. |
| 1069 | XXXII. | Dominico Silvio. |
| 1084 | XXXIII. | Vitale Faliero. |
| 1094 | XXXIV. | Vitale Michieli. |
| 1102 | XXXV. | Ordelafio Faliero. |
| 1117 | XXXVI. | Dominico Michieli. |
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IN our own days, and in the full remembrance of many by whom these pages will be opened, a powerful and most illustrious republic has perished before our eyes. Her political existence has been utterly abolished, and is now well nigh forgotten. Yet, though Venice no longer holds her former eminent station among the independent governments of Europe; though her maritime sceptre has been wrested from her hand, and her Eastern diadem plucked from her brow; though she, who once boasted sovereignty over almost a moiety of the Roman world, now ranks but as a conquered province—the scorn and the prey of strangers, whom, in her pride, she despised as barbarians; yet the memory of those glories which she won during her “high and palmy state” is, perhaps, more likely to be transmitted in its full lustre to posterity than if she still retained her dominion. By a chance unexampled in former history, the very blow which levelled her to the dust burst open and disclosed the secret mechanism by which her greatness had been constructed; and the hidden mysteries of her state-policy, the riddle and the admiration of centuries, have been discovered and revealed but in the moment of her expiring agony. Much of atrocious guilt, of oppression, cruelty, fraud, treachery, baseness, and ingratitude will darken any review of her annals. But from the documents which the possession of her surrendered archives placed in the hands of her conquerors, and upon the faith of which the succeeding narrative is mainly founded, the rulers of Venice must be pronounced, without reserve, to have been pre-eminently “wise in their generation.” It is our intention,

in the following pages, to present in detail some of the most striking incidents of the history of this great republic, connecting them with each other by a brief and rapid survey of minor events.

THAT fertile district of Italy which is contained at its north-eastern angle, between the Alps and the innermost coast of the Adriatic Gulf, was known at a very early date by the name of *Venetia*, from its inhabitants the *Veneti*, or *Henezi*. The origin and migrations of this people are matters of deep obscurity, and they are variously related, according to the fancies of the genealogists of nations. This question, however curious to the antiquary, is otherwise unimportant, and may be safely dismissed without further inquiry. From whatever country the *Veneti* may have migrated, the extreme position which they assumed in Italy proves that they were among its latest colonizers on the north. Almost as little is known of them for a long period after their settlement as before their arrival; for it is not till the fourth century of Rome that we obtain even an incidental fact concerning them; but this fact is important, for it proves that the people to whom it relates must have been powerful and warlike, and it belongs also to an event upon which no less depended than the very existence of Rome herself. At a time in which all was lost to the Eternal City except her Capitol, Polybius* tells us that the invading Gauls were obliged to retrace their steps hastily, in consequence of a diversion into their own territories effected by the *Veneti*. This good service was acknowledged by an embassy, from which resulted a formal alliance between Rome and *Venetia*.

Exclusively of any claims of gratitude, discretion would no less prompt the Romans to encourage a connexion with *Venetia*. A state, the territory of which embraced fifty cities and a population of a million and a half of souls,* abundant in produce, and furnishing a breed of horses which often successfully competed in the Olympic stadium with the fleetest racers of Greece, might, from its neighbourhood, be no less dangerous as an enemy than it had proved itself beneficial as an ally. The transition from such alliance to

* II. 18.

† Cramer's *Italy*, vol. i. p. 113, and the authorities there given.

dominion was one of the leading master-secrets of the policy of Rome. By what insensible degrees the *Veneti* forfeited their independence, whether it was reluctantly surrendered to force, or willingly accorded for protection, is not now to be determined. Nothing more is known, except that, in the second Punic war, they furnished a contingent against Hannibal ; and that they were at length merged among the other districts which contributed to form the province of Cisalpine Gaul.

Henceforward, *Venetia* is to be considered as a constituent part of the Roman Empire, and, during the existence of that empire, as partaking of its fortunes. In the division of Augustus it formed his tenth region.* Its boundaries were, on the west, a line drawn from the *Athesis* (Adige), to the *Padus* (Po) ; on the north, the Alps ; the Adriatic on the east ; and the Po once again on the south.

We pass on therefore to the fifth century of the Christian era and to the invasion of Attila ; the epoch from which the existence of the modern Venetians must be dated. During the second incursion of the Gothic Alaric, when Rome herself had yielded to his assault, notwithstanding A. D. 400. the splendid temporary advantages obtained by Stilicho, *Venetia* was subjected for more than three years to the occupation and the ravages of the Barbarians. The premature death of that ferocious conqueror in the midst of his career of triumph, and the pacific retreat of A. D. 409. his milder brother and successor, Adolphus, afforded but a short relief to the falling empire : for the Scythian hive contained new swarms which it was preparing to pour forth ; and the sword of Mars, after having depopulated the East, was whetting itself, with yet greater keenness, for the harvest of Italy. As Attila advanced, his fearful threat that "the grass never grew where his horse once trod," was realized to the very letter : and when Aquileia, in revenge for her gallant defence, had been so levelled as to be even without ruins, scarcely another A. D. 452. city throughout the plains of Lombardy ventured to oppose a resistance which must inevitably involve it in like destruction. The wretched inhabitants of Concordia, Oderso, Altino, Padua, and the neighbouring towns avoided the

* Pliny, book iii. ch. 18.

approaching tempest which they dared not abide ; and, content with the preservation of their lives and their moveables, they abandoned their hearths to the fury of the conqueror.

The great object of the fugitives was to escape pursuit, and security could be best obtained by retirement to spots either difficult of access, or presenting little allurement to the cupidity of an invader chiefly hungering after spoil. Both of these qualifications were combined on the neighbouring shore of the Adriatic. About the mouths of the numerous rivers which discharge themselves over a space of thirty leagues on the north-western coast of that gulf, from Grado to Chiozza, are situated very numerous small islands, embanked against the open sea by long, narrow, intervening slips of land, which serve as so many natural breakwaters. This *aggere*, as it is termed, has been formed by the deposite of countless rivers, a deposite borne down them for ages in a rapid fall, and not arrested till it meets the sea ; where it has raised itself into impregnable ramparts (*murazzi*), against the inroads of the waves. Towards the land, these islands are equally protected ; partly by the channels of the great rivers, the Lizonzo, the Tagliamento, and the Livenza, flowing from the Julian Alps ; the Piave, the Musone, the Brenta, and the Adige, swollen with the snows of the Tyrol ; and the Po, charged with waters both from the Alps and Apennines ; and partly by a yet more powerful defence in a bed of soft mud, covered with water, not exceeding, for the most part, one or two feet in depth, and extending, at the time of which we are now writing, between twenty and thirty miles from the outer shore. This expanse, the *Lagune*, which cannot justly be considered either sea or land, is navigable only by skiffs drawing a few inches water : but wherever it is traversed by any of the estuaries of the rivers, or yet more by canals excavated for the purpose, ships of considerable burden may ride securely. The entrances through the outer barrier are few, and the navigation afterward most intricate and difficult ; so that much skill and long acquaintance with the watercourses are necessary for pilotage through their labyrinths. The islands within the barrier are scattered through various parts of the *Lagune* ; some divided from each other but by narrow channels ; others

more remote, as so many outposts. Rialto,* the chief of these, had long served as a port to Padua, and a few buildings for naval purposes had been constructed upon it. All else was barren, desolate, and uncultivated. But the very qualities which, under different circumstances, would have been most repulsive to voluntary settlers, presented attractions and offered advantages to the exiles of *Venetia* not to be expected in other places ; and the safety for which they might have looked in vain on a soil richly indebted to nature was to be found by them, if anywhere, amid this wilderness of waters.

The fall of Aquileia and the self-banishment of the neighbouring inhabitants occurred in the year 452 of our era ; but yet earlier some rudiments of its future greatness may be traced on Rialto. A church, dedicated to St. James, had been erected there in 421 ; about the same time a decree had issued from Padua for the formation of a town on its naked shores, in order to consolidate the few stragglers who were to be found on the neighbouring islands ; and for the government of this infant community, annual magistrates, under the title of consuls, had been appointed by the mother city. Sabellico has preserved a tradition, partially received, that the earliest buildings of this town were raised on the very spot now occupied by the cathedral of St. Mark. Another belief, from which he assures us there is no dissent, affirms that the first foundations were laid on the 25th of March—a day on which none but a work of more than ordinary magnificence and dignity could be commenced. It is the day on which the Saviour was conceived in the womb of the Virgin ; and that also on which, as the historian discovers in holy writ, Adam, the parent of mankind, was formed by God.† Pietro Justiniani has presented us in his history with an astrological scheme of the nativity of these foundations, calculated with precision to the hour of noon on the 25th of March, A. D. 421 ; and he assures us that this horoscope prognosticates the happiest fortunes. It was not only to this little town, how-

* *Rivo alto*, the deep stream, abbreviated into *Rialto*, is first the name of this island, *Isla de Rialto* ; then of the bridge, *il Ponte di Rialto*, which connects it with the opposite bank ; and lastly of the exchange, the *Rialto* of Shakespeare, which stands upon this island.

† *Dec. I. lib. I. p. 14.*

ever, that the exiles directed their steps. Its narrow dimensions, indeed, forbade the reception of all who thronged to it, and the sands of Grado, Caorlo, Malamocco, and Pelestrina were covered by inmates. The mixed feeling of regret for the homes which they had abandoned, and of thankfulness for those in which they had found refuge, is strongly evinced in the name given by the townsmen of Altino to the asylum which they occupied : they called it “the port of the deserted city.”

Before the towns on the continent could rise again from their ashes, the foundations of an independent government had already been laid in the new state. Each principal island elected a tribune, as a judicial magistrate, who continued in office for a single year, and who was responsible for the execution of his duties to a general assembly. The inhabitants dedicated themselves to the only employments which their scanty territory permitted, fishing and the manufacture of salt ; and safely, because obscurely, sheltered from the repeated calamities by which the country they had abandoned was desolated, they continued to gain an increase of strength by the new citizens which each fresh continental outrage added to their numbers. When, in the sixth century, the Lombards under Alboin established A. D. 665. themselves in Italy, the new invaders followed in the track of their barbarian predecessors ; and the inhabitants whom ancient *Venetia* still retained were compelled to seek the same asylums which, more than two centuries before, had received the original exiles. The citizens of Altino fled to Torcello ; those of Concordia to Caorlo ; and the Paduans became suppliants for a refuge, which was not denied, in that Rialto from which they had not long before demanded the obedience of a subject.

This increase of population in the islands, as it multiplied their interests, so also it demanded a greater vigour than was possessed by their existing government. The details of the change have not reached us ; but it appears that some abuses sowed the seeds of party spirit, and that the republic was menaced by internal divisions. On these accounts, the general assembly was convoked at Heraclea, and it was wisely determined to confide in a single hand the power which hitherto had been partitioned among several tribunes. The title proposed was

Doge, or, in other words, *duke*. It is believed that twelve electors, whose names have been preserved, and who are the stocks from which afterward sprang the most illustrious families in Venice, united their suffrages in favour of Paolo Luca Anafesto, a citizen of Heraclea. His dignity was conferred for life; he was assisted by a council of state, the members of which he himself nominated; the public revenue was at his disposal; the general assembly was summoned at his decree; he appointed the judges and tribunes; appeals from them lay to his jurisdiction; all ecclesiastical synods were convoked by him; and although the election of prelates still remained with the people, the right of investiture, which operated as a *veto*, belonged to the doge. Above all, he alone possessed the prerogative of peace or war. Little else, it may be imagined, besides these extensive privileges, was wanting to constitute a pure despotism.

This unlimited authority, however, does not appear to have been abused till the reign of the third doge, Fabriciazio Urso, who was assassinated in a popular tumult which he had provoked by his haughtiness. The experiment of a chief magistrate for life had been tried and appeared to have failed. Without any diminution of his power, it was now resolved to limit its duration; and a ruler under the title of *Maestro della Milizia* or *de' Soldati*, elected ^{A. D.} 737. but for a year, supplied the place of the abolished doge. Five *Maestri*, or *Mastromili* as the name became corrupted, are recorded in succession, before the title of doge was revived. The reigns which succeeded, during many years after this renewal, were, for the most part, signalized by oppression on the side of the prince, and by resistance on that of the people; and they terminated, in frequent instances, by the expulsion of the tyrant. In one of these numerous struggles, the intervention of Pepin, ^{A. D.} 804. upon whom his father Charlemagne had recently bestowed the crown of Lombardy, was incautiously solicited; and the new king readily entered upon a connexion affording pretext for hostilities against a state which, from its contiguity with his own dominions, he might hope to include, one day, within their limits. The events which followed are obscure and variously related; but thus much is certain, that the republic of the islands was soon taught that

lesson so often to be learned from history, how dangerous it is to invite the interference of a powerful neighbour. It was not to secure the election of a doge of Venice that the king of the Lombards had armed : his objects were directed, through this excuse, to his own aggrandizement ; and, taking occasion from the refusal of his allies to assist him in the conquest of Dalmatia, which he wished to add to his acquisitions in Istria and Friuli, he directed against the western shore of the Adriatic that armament which had been ostensibly assembled to obtain mastery of its eastern borders. Heraclea and Equilo were attacked and given to the flames ; and it was only at the personal solicitation of Obelerio, the candidate whose interest he espoused, and who, in opposition to his fellow-citizens, had strongly advocated the necessity of joining in the Dalmatian expedition, that the remaining towns escaped similar ravages, and that the invading troops were withdrawn. A fresh provocation, indiscreetly offered, renewed the anger of Pepin, and he was not slow in manifesting it. The fort of Brondolo and the islands of Chiozza and Pelestrina speedily surrendered to him ; and Malamocco, the capital, was already invested by troops thirsting for its plunder, and separated from it, now Albiolo was conquered, only by the narrow channel of a single canal. Pepin's bridges were constructed, the stream was crossed, and he entered the city ; but it was to a barren triumph, for the whole population had abandoned its walls. Listening to the advice of Angelo Participazio, one of those great men whose illustrious qualities are best displayed in times of danger, they had thrown themselves into their galleys, and taken up a position on Rialto, in the very centre of the *Lagune*, where, protected from invasion by broader channels, they determined to maintain a desperate and extreme resistance. The Lombard king summoned them to surrender at discretion. On their refusal, he endeavoured to form a bridge of boats, which was destroyed ; and, in a second attempt to transport his whole forces in large vessels, well adapted for the open sea, but little fitted for the shifting and uncertain depths of the *Lagune*, he became entangled in their shallows. The islanders, profiting by his embarrassment, set fire to the stranded vessels, and continued the work of destruction till the flow of the returning tide enabled the shattered fleet to withdraw to Malamocco.

The towns already in the power of the invader endured the fullest calamities which defeat and disappointed ambition could inflict ; and Pepin, having thus far gratified his revenge, abandoned all further operations and retreated to the continent.

Angelo Participazio had saved his country, and the chief dignity which she could bestow was his just reward. Obelerio was solemnly rejected, and the new doge actively engaged himself in the confirmation of that security to which his wisdom had pointed the way. The sixty islets which clustered round Rialto were connected with it and each other by bridges ; a new capital arose within their circuit ; a cathedral and a ducal palace were founded on the site which they still occupy ; and the name of the province on *terra firma* from which the citizens derived their origin was given to the metropolis which they were creating. Such was the birth of VENICE.

In the reign of Justiniani Participazio, the son and successor of Angelo, undistinguished by events of more important character, the Venetians became possessed of the relics of that saint to whom they ever afterward appealed as the great patron of their state and city. These remains were obtained from Alexandria by a pious stratagem, at a time when the church wherein they were originally deposited was about to be destroyed, in order that its rich marbles might be applied to the decoration of a palace. At that fortunate season, some Venetian ships (it is said no less than ten, a fact proving the prosperous extent of their early commerce) happened to be trading in that port ; and their captains, though not without much difficulty, succeeded in obtaining from the priests who had the custody of the holy treasure its deliverance into their hands, in order that it might escape profanation. It was necessary, however, that this transfer should be made in secrecy ; for we are assured by Sabellico, who relates the occurrence minutely, that the miracles which had been daily wrought at the saint's shrine had strongly attached the populace to his memory. The priests carefully opened the cerements in which the body was enveloped ; and considering, doubtless, that one dead saint possessed no less intrinsic virtue and value than another, they very adroitly substituted the corpse of a female, Sta. Claudia, in the folds

which had been occupied by that of St. Mark. But they had widely erred in their graduation of the scale of beatitude. So great was the odour of superior sanctity, that a rich perfume diffused itself through the church at the moment at which the grave-clothes of the evangelist were disturbed ; and the holy robbery was well nigh betrayed to the eager crowd of worshippers, who, attracted by the sweet smell, thronged to inspect the relics and to ascertain their safety. After examination, they retired, satisfied that their favourite saint was inviolate : for the slit which the priests had made in his cerements was behind and out of sight. But the Venetians still had to protect the embarkation of their prize. For this purpose, effectually to prevent all chance of search, they placed the body in a large basket stuffed with herbs and covered with joints of pork. The porters who bore it were instructed to cry loudly “*Khanzir, Khanzir!*”* and every true Mussulman whom they met carefully avoided the uncleanness with which he was threatened by contact with this forbidden flesh. Even when once on board, the body was not yet quite safe ; for accident might reveal the contents of the basket ; it was therefore wrapped in one of the sails and hoisted to a yard-arm of the main-mast, till the moment of departure. Nor was this precaution unnecessary ; for the unbelievers instituted a strict search for contraband goods before the vessel sailed. During the voyage, the ship was in danger from a violent storm ; and but for the timely appearance of the saint, who warned the captain to furl his sails, she would inevitably have been lost. The joy of the Venetians, on the arrival of this precious cargo, was manifested by fasting, music, processions, and prayers. An ancient tradition was called to mind, that St. Mark, in his travels, had visited Aquileia ; and having touched also at the Hundred Isles, at that time uninhabited, had been informed, in a prophetic vision, that his bones should one day repose upon their shores. Venice was solemnly consigned to his protection. The saint himself, or his lion, was blazoned on her standards and impressed on her coinage ; and the shout of the populace, whether on occasions of sedition or of joy, and the gathering cry of the

* *Khanzir*, Arab. a hog. A cape on the coast of Syria is named *Ras el Khanzir*, i. e. hog's-head.

armies of the republic in battle was, henceforward, " *Viva San Marco!*"

The lion of St. Mark has a more profound meaning than he may appear to bear at first sight. As the heralds would blazon him, he is *azure, siegeant*, his wings *or*, and he holds a book *argent*, open under his paws. He sits, as we are told, in order to show that the Venetians are wise and pacific ; for sages and counsellors mostly use that attitude : moreover to evince that they conquer rather by address than by violence, as it was said of the Romans—*Romanus sedendo vincit*. He is winged, to show that they are prompt in execution. On one occasion these wings furnished a pungent reply to an imperial ambassador who inquired in what country such a species of lions was to be found ? " In the same country," answered the reigning doge, " which produces spread eagles." The legend written on the book is *Pax tibi, Marce, Evangelista meus*, the salutation addressed by an angel to the saint when he landed, as above mentioned, at the spot now occupied by the church and convent of San Francesco della Vigna. But in time of war the book is closed, and a naked sword is placed in the lion's paws.* It is scarcely necessary to add that the first notion of the lion is borrowed from one of the visions of Daniel : of the four great beasts which that prophet saw, " the first was like a lion and had eagle's wings."† But the symbols of the evangelist have been a matter fruitful of discussion.

Notwithstanding the splendour of his reception, and the many subsequent testimonies of high honour which he received, the saint occasionally proved capricious, and did not always deign to show himself even to his most illustrious visitors. Two centuries after the above translation (1094), when the emperor Henry III. made an express pilgrimage to his shrine, the body had very petulantly disappeared. The priests had recourse to prayer and fasting for its recovery, and the whole capital was engaged in tears, abstinence, and supplication. At length the saint relented. One morning the sacristan whose turn it was to attend the church in which the body *ought* to have been found, perceived, on entering, a fragrant odour and a brilliant light,

* Amelot de la Houssaye, *Hist. du Gouvern. de Venise*, p. 568.

† Chap. vii. 4.
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which issued from a particular column. The simple priest imagined that there was a fire, and ran up in affright to extinguish it ; nor was his alarm diminished when he saw a human arm protruding from the column. He hastened to the doge and announced this marvel, and the bishop of Olivolo and the other clergy, having been summoned, repaired, with profound devotion, to the church. There, as they knelt before the pillar, the arm dropped a ring from one of the fingers of its hand into the bishop's bosom ; and at the same time the column opened and displayed an iron coffin enclosing the remains of the evangelist. The holy corpse wrought numerous miracles ; and a feast was instituted to commemorate its invention. On each 24th of July, while the *magnificat* was being chanted, the congregation was sprinkled with rose-water, in memory of the sweet odour, and two tapers were lighted before the pillar. Among the other relics which on this occasion were borne abroad in splendid procession was an autograph of his gospel from the evangelist's own pen, in which, unhappily, learned men are undetermined whether the character is Greek or Latin,* and whether the material is paper or parchment. The ring was sacrilegiously stolen in the year 1585, and, perhaps, the body has undergone a similar fate. Having been placed in a receptacle more worthy of it, the secret of which was intrusted to none save the doge, and the *provveditori*—officers especially appointed for the saint's guardianship—a magnificent church was decreed and built over this mysterious tomb.† Yet a modern traveller, who was by no means likely to approach this legend with an eye of skepticism, roundly taxes Carossio, who about twenty years afterward for a short time usurped the throne, with a *private sale* of the relics. “Since his time,” says Eustace, “the existence of the body of St. Mark has never been publicly ascertained. The place, however, where the sacred deposit lies is acknowledged to be an *undivulged secret*; or, perhaps, in less cautious language, to be utterly unknown.”‡

* Hey's *Lectures*, I. 37, where a reference is given to Michaelis, § 12, 410. But a full account of the MS. may be found in the *Diarium Italicum* of Montfaucon (c. iv. p. 55). That profound scholar and antiquary examined it very closely, and decided that it was Latin. He describes it as perishing from the dampness of its repository.

† Sebellico, Decad. I: lib. v. *ad fin.*

‡ Classical Trav., vol. i. p. 171.

A whole century ensued presenting little matter which deserves attention, and the reigns of the six doges by which that period was occupied may be passed in silence. Under Candiano II., occurred one of those events A. D. 932. which vividly depict the manners of the age to which they belong ; and which, though affecting individuals rather than a nation, excite nevertheless very powerful interest, and almost connect history with romance.* According to an ancient usage, the marriages among the chief families at Venice were celebrated publicly. The same day and the same hour witnessed the union of numerous betrothed ; and the eve of the feast of the Purification, on the return of which the republic gave portions to twelve young maidens, was the season of this joyous anniversary. It was to Olivolo, the residence of the patriarch, on the extreme verge of the city, that the ornamented gondolas repaired on this happy morning. There, hailed by music and the gratulations of their assembled kindred, the lovers disembarked ; and the festive pomp, swelled by a long train of friends, richly clad, and bearing with them, in proud display, the jewels and nuptial presents of the brides, proceeded to the cathedral. The pirates of Istria had long marked this peaceful show as affording a rich promise of booty ; for, at the time of which we are writing, the arsenal and its surrounding mansions were not yet in existence, Olivolo was untenanted, except by priests, and its neighbourhood was entirely without inhabitants. In these deserted spots the corsairs lay in ambush the night before the ceremony ; and while the unarmed and unsuspecting citizens were yet engaged in the marriage rites before the altar, a rude and ferocious troop burst the gates of the cathedral. Not content with seizing the costly ornaments which became their prize, they tore away also the weeping and heart-broken brides, and hurried them to their vessels. The doge had honoured the festival with his presence, and, deeply touched by the rage and despair of the disappointed bridegrooms, he summoned the citizens to arms. Hastily assembling such galleys as were in the harbour, they profited by a favourable wind, and overtook the ravishers before they were extricated from the Lagune of Caorlo. Candiano led the

* Mr. Rogers in his *Italy*, "The Brides of Venice," has already familiarized English ears with this most romantic incident.

attack, and such was its fury that not a single Istriote escaped the death which he merited. The maidens were brought back in triumph; and on the evening of the same day the interrupted rites were solemnized with joy, no doubt much heightened by a remembrance of the peril which had so well nigh prevented their completion. The memory of this singular event was long kept alive by an annual procession of Venetian women on the eve of the Purification, and by a solemn visit paid by the doge to the church of Sta. Maria Formosa.

It was by the trunkmakers (*cassellari*) of the island on which the above-named church stands that the greater part of the crew, hastily collected on this occasion, was furnished; and Candiano, as a reward for their bravery, asked them to demand some privilege. They requested this annual visit to their island. "What," said the prince, "if the day should prove rainy?"—"We will send you hats to cover your heads, and if you are thirsty we will give you drink." To commemorate this question and reply the priest of Sta. Maria was used to offer to the doge, on landing, two flasks of malmsey, two oranges, and two hats, adorned with his own armorial bearings, those of the pope, and those of the doge. The Marian games (*La Festa delle Marie*), of which this *andata* formed part, and which lasted for six days, continued to be celebrated till they were interrupted by the public distress during the war of Chiozza.* They were renewed two hundred years afterward with yet greater pomp; but of the time at which they fell into total disuse we are unable to speak.

The three reigns which immediately followed were barren of events of interest, though not unmarked by bloodshed and internal tumult. At length one doge, Pietro A. D. Urseolo I., deservedly acquired the affections of his 976. subjects; but the gentle virtues to which he was indebted for their love were of that class which rendered the toils of government irksome; and having resolved upon abdication, after two short years of rule, he quitted his palace under disguise and by stratagem, in order to escape detention, and secluded himself in the neighbouring abbey of Perpignan. There his meekness and devotion obtained

* Babolico, Dec. I. lib. iii. p. 66.

for him far higher honours than those of the throne which he had resigned ; and after his death the holy see enrolled him among her list of saints. His memory was long venerated by his countrymen, and even so late as the year 1732, his right arm, enclosed, as a relic of inestimable value, in a silver shrine of exquisite workmanship, was deposited in the treasury of St. Mark. Thirteen years, with the intervention of two reigns, passed before his son, a second Pietro Urseolo, was called to the throne. Report asserted that the abdicated doge, already advanced many steps ^{A. D.} 991. towards his future canonization, had long ago prophesied the greatness of his child. On this account, the most favourable auguries attended the opening reign, and the wise administration of the new prince justified the hopes of his country. The largely extended commerce of Venice, by increasing her internal wealth and resources, had awakened also her ambition for foreign conquest ; and the lapse of five centuries, through which we have passed in the above brief sketch of her history, had not only raised the original small band of exiles and fishermen into a rich, powerful, and independent nation, but at the same time had created a natural wish that these riches and this power should find a wider scene of display than was afforded by the narrow limits of the *Lagune* and a few adjoining ports. Urseolo II. was fitted for the crisis at which he reigned. Having, in the first instance, appeased the rage of domestic faction, he next addressed himself to commercial treaties, and his negotiations secured, yet more fully than it had hitherto been possessed, the command of the chief neighbouring ports and rivers of Italy, obtained extensive privileges and exemptions from the Greek emperor, and cultivated the goodwill and alliance of the Syrian and Egyptian sultans. Venice, long before the close of the tenth century, had become the emporium not only of Italy but of Greece and of all the countries bordering on the Adriatic : and while Pisa, Genoa, and Amalfi, subsequently her chief maritime competitors, were but scantily known, she was the exclusive factor between Europe and the Levant. The eastern coast of the Adriatic, notwithstanding this commercial pre-eminence of Venice, possessed numerous ports maintaining themselves by an advantageous trade. As each of the empires which bordered them on either confine diminished in strength,

these districts gradually asserted independence ; and their progress was naturally regarded with a watchful and jealous eye by the Venetian government. But the Istrians, the Liburnians, and the Dalmatians were destined to aggrandize, not to rival, the queen of the Adriatic. Venice, no less than her maritime neighbours, continued to be harassed by the pirates of Narenta ; and whatever occasional exemption she might enjoy from plunder was purchased by the disgraceful humiliation of an annual tribute. We know not whether, as has been sometimes said, the Dalmatian towns voluntarily tendered submission as the price of delivery from these robbers, or whether the Venetians plausibly armed in their defence, as a pretext to veil ultimate designs of conquest ; but in the spring of 997, a powerful fleet was manned, either for their protection or subjection ; and the A. D. 997. doge, having received the standard of St. Mark from the hands of the bishop, embarked on the first expedition undertaken by his country for extension of territory. His progress was a continued and, for the most part, a peaceful triumph. At Parenzo and at Pola he was admitted with open arms by the citizens, who solicited him to adopt them as children of his republic. Capo d'Istria, Pirano, Isola, Emone, Rovigno, Humago, and Zara, all professed oaths of fealty, and hailed him as deliverer and sovereign. Mulcimir, King of Croatia, found safety in alliance, cemented by the marriage of his son with a daughter of the doge. Equal submission awaited him from Spalatro to Lissa, and the first resistance which he encountered was offered by the islands Curzola and Lesina. The former of these was won without difficulty, for it possessed little means of defence ; but Lesina presented a formidable opposition, both from the natural advantages of its site, and yet more from the precaution of the Narentines, who had established on it a dépôt strongly fortified and garrisoned. The Venetians speedily blockaded the port and invested the town ; and on the refusal of their first summons they pressed to the assault. The defence was long and brave, and the carnage proportionately murderous ; but in the end the garrison was compelled to yield. The lives of the inhabitants were spared ; and on the same spot whereon the doge received the keys of Lesina, the submission of Ragusa also, extorted by the terror of his arms, was tendered and accepted.

The possession of Curzola and Lesina, the outworks of Narenta, rendered that bay itself defenceless; and the Venetian army, disembarking without opposition, desolated the neighbourhood with fire and sword. Few of the inhabitants escaped this war of extermination; and when, fatigued with slaughter, the invaders admitted the small remnant to terms, those terms were such as the recollection of two centuries of injury might be expected to dictate. The tribute was abolished, the population disarmed, indemnities for former plunder were rigidly demanded, and the whole resources of this little state, if a union of pirates may be so named, were placed at the command of the victors. The government of all these newly-acquired territories was framed after a model of great simplicity, and without any distinction between cessions and conquests. A *podesta*, nominated by the doge from some principal family in Venice, administered in each town in the name of the republic; and the natives were utterly excluded from participation in public affairs.

These brilliant successes of Urseolo were gratefully acknowledged. To the title of Duke of Venice was annexed that of Duke of Dalmatia; the emperor Otho III. honoured him by becoming sponsor to his son; and on a progress which he made to Rome, after passing three days in Venice, he relieved her at the prayer of the doge from a testimony of vassalage which had become offensive to the growing pride of the citizens; declining the receipt of a robe of cloth of gold which had hitherto been annually sent as a mark of dependence. More substantial tokens of imperial favour were shown by exemptions granted throughout his dominions, and by permission to occupy certain neighbouring ports. This visit of Otho was paid under the most rigid incognito. He arrived at night, attended by not more than five domestics; and was received in the monastery of San Servolo, as affording readier means of concealment than any other private or public lodging. The doge, having been admitted to his first audience, which also took place by night, after exchanging congratulations with the emperor, accompanied him to St. Mark's; whence Otho, having paid his devotions, passed with no less secrecy to the ducal palace. During his stay, Urseolo, to avoid suspicion, always dined in public; and in the evening supped in intimate familiarity

with his illustrious guest. It was not till three days after the emperor's departure that the doge convoked a general assembly, and having announced the visit of Otho and the gracious concessions to which he had been pleased to agree, received the warmest thanks and applause of his people, for the consummate prudence and inviolable secrecy which he had maintained. So early was mystery, even respecting trifles, esteemed a praiseworthy quality in the rulers of Venice !

The reign of Othon, the son of Pietro Urseolo, A. D. 1006. was distinguished by the conquest of Hadria. In a war which her citizens provoked by a claim to the territory of Loredo, the doge vigorously marched to repulse an attack upon that district, defeated the invaders, and pursuing their routed forces, besieged, captured, and destroyed their town. Such was the fate of that once great and flourishing city, which in times of remote antiquity was doubtless the chief port of its cognate Adriatic. Even if not of much earlier origin, it was the principal seat of such commerce as the Tuscans enjoyed when their dominion extended from that sea to the Mediterranean : so late as the fourth century Pliny speaks of its "noble harbour :" and, at the period which we are now considering, it retained sufficient power to need the direct chastisement of Venice ; but in our own days both man and nature appear jointly to have conspired against its prosperity. It is still, indeed, the seat of a bishop, but it has dwindled into a mean and ruined village, rejected even by the sea bearing its name, and removed, by one of those changes not uncommon on a shifting coast, no less than eighteen miles from the waters which once bore riches to its haven.

Dominieo Flabenigo, who succeeded to the throne in 1030, procured the enactment of an important and A. D. 1030. most salutary law. The state had hitherto been saved from hereditary usurpation solely by the frequent recurrence of insurrection and, occasionally, of lawless bloodshed. The greater number of doges had endeavoured to perpetuate the succession in their own families ; five had already sprung from a single stock ; several had been associated without even the nominal consent of the people ; and the remedies which the republic had been compelled to apply in four instances were no milder than death

or banishment. A law was now proposed that no successor should in future be named during the lifetime of the reigning doge. It was unanimously accepted, recorded as a fundamental institute of the government, and ever afterward observed inviolably.

The chroniclers have presented an amusing picture of the luxurious habits of the Constantinopolitan fair one who shared the crown of Dominico Silvio, a later doge. Such, we are assured, was the extent of her refinement—*adeo moros& fuit elegantia*,—that she banished the use of plain water from her toilet, and washed herself only with the richest and most fragrant medicated preparations. Her apartments were so saturated with perfumes, that those who were unaccustomed to such odours often fainted upon entering;* and as the climax of sinful indulgence (for such it appears to the narrator) in the inordinate pride of her evil heart, she refused to employ her fingers in eating, and never touched her meat unless with a golden fork. Her end was in miserable contrast with these Sybaritic manners. She was stricken with a sore disease, considered, no doubt, as an especial judgment; and her sufferings, which were long protracted, were of such a nature as to excite rather the disgust than the pity of her attendants.†

Vitale Faliero, who was next called to the throne, largely benefited the republic by skilful negotiations. The Greek emperor, Comnenus, renounced in favour of Venice the pretensions which he had hitherto asserted to nominal sovereignty over Dalmatia; he granted a free entrance to her ships into all his ports, and assigned warehouses for their goods; he naturalized her residents at Constantinople, and he compelled the merchants of Amalfi to pay an annual tribute to the cathedral of St. Mark. The establishment of a fair in honour of that saint, which occurred about this time, by mingling the purposes of devotion with those of commerce, attracted numerous throngs of visitors to the Venetian capital, who by the largeness of their

* The Venetian ladies are still morbidly sensible to the smell of perfumes. Mr. W. S. Rose, in his very agreeable *Letters from the North of Italy*, describes them as fainting at the odour of common essences, and speaks of well-authenticated instances of deaths in childbed from similar causes.

† Sabolico, *Decad. I. lib. iv. ad ann. 1071*, who cites Damianus.

expenditure contributed to the increase of the national wealth. So lucrative did these institutions prove, that other canonized remains received similar honours ; and such was the consequent ardour with which relics were collected, as allurements for pilgrim-merchants, that when the agents who had been despatched to purchase the body of San Tarasio, a defunct patriarch of Constantinople, failed in their bidding, the saint was transported to the Adriatic by means very little in accordance with honesty.

A new and far wider scene of conquest was opened by this alliance with Constantinople ; and the narrow limits of the Adriatic were no longer to bound the Venetian dominion. It is not here that we need trace the rise of the crusades, nor the manifold causes which summoned the whole armed population of Europe to a romantic and perilous warfare in the East. The part borne by Venice in these expeditions rendered her most illustrious : the consequences were greater than her most sanguine citizens could dare to imagine in their warmest and most glowing dreams of ambition ; and it is only to her share in this extraordinary portion of history, and to the brilliant results which she drew from it, that we propose to confine our narrative.

To whatever extent Venice may have partaken in the general religious enthusiasm which filled the ranks of the crusaders, there were reasons also of worldly policy which must have prompted her to be among the most forward in any contest of which the East was to be the theatre. Greatly as she might desire the expulsion of the Infidels who profaned the holy places and engrossed the wealth of Syria ; and much as she might wish to supplant the present possessors of spots so favourable to religious ardour and to oriental commerce ; her interests no less powerfully demanded that she should prevent the intrusion of those who were likely to become competitors with herself ; and she could not but foresee that in the same proportion in which other European nations became established in the Levant, even so her own mercantile prosperity was about to be diminished. Whatever hesitation, therefore, might at first be felt, must have been owing to the natural coldness and repugnance, or rather the alarm and jealousy, with which the Greek emperor observed the approach of those vast

armaments which were pouring into his neighbourhood from the West. Venice was in too close connexion with Constantinople, and, for the present, too deeply concerned in preserving her amicable relations with that court, to run the hazard of giving offence by acting contrary to its wishes. Two years, therefore, appear to have elapsed after the departure of the first champions of the Cross, before the republic determined to provide her contingent to the great confederacy ; and in the very outset an event occurred sufficiently manifesting how little likely she was to forget her private and national advantages in the furtherance of the general cause. The fleet which sailed from the Adriatic, while Vitale Michieli was doge, consisted of somewhat more than two hundred vessels, A. D. 1098. of which one-half was furnished by the Dalmatian ports. Arrived off Rhodes, it formed a junction with a Pisan armament, bound to the same coasts and directed to the same object. The two republics were on terms of professed amity with each other, when an unseemly difference, ill according with the avowed motives of their expedition, led to a dispute and a battle. The little island of San Nicolo contained the body of the saint from whom it was named—a deposit of much value in the eyes of the Venetians, for reasons which we have just stated. Whether the purchasers were niggardly in the price which they offered, or whether the Caloyers, to whom the merchandise belonged, were exorbitant in their demands, is not now to be ascertained ; but the Venetians, unable to complete a satisfactory bargain, resolved to possess by force that which they could not obtain by negotiation. The relics were torn from their shrine, and conveyed to one of the Venetian galleys ; not, however, to be received in peace ; for the partition of the spoil became an object of dispute between the allies. The Pisans urged, that, being on the spot, they were entitled to at least half the body ; the Venetians denied their claim to any part of it. Angry words were quickly succeeded by direct hostilities ; and the two Christian fleets, designed to rescue the holy sepulchre from unbelievers, diverted their arms in the first instance to purposes of mutual destruction, for the possession of a dead man's bones. The superior number of the Venetians did not allow victory to be long suspended ;

and the capture of twenty Pisan galleys and of five thousand prisoners was the result of the contest.

The coast of Syria was occupied by the crusaders, and it was there that the aid of the Venetians would have been most effectual : true, however, to the pursuit of gain, they directed their course after this engagement to Smyrna, an undefended town, which could not offer resistance to their pillage. Whether they assisted afterward in the blockade and conquest of Jaffa is by no means certain ; sure it is, however, that before the approach of winter they returned to their harbours, bearing with them the fruits of their piracy, and devoutly committing the relics of San Nicolo to a chapel on the isle of Lido. In the following campaign, they partook in some degree in the successes at Ascalon and at Caiapha : but their co-operation was tardy and languid. The more vigorous exertions of the next A. D. 1102. doge, Ordelafo Faliero, contributed to the reduction of Acre, of Sidon, and of Berythus ; and, as the Christian arms advanced in Palestine, Venice, no less than the other maritime republics, largely partook of the benefits of conquest ; and the seeds of future jealousy were sown among them by the very equality of partition. If Venice obtained, from the profuse liberality of Baldwin, one-fourth part of the city of Acre, a free commerce throughout his new kingdom of Jerusalem, and an immunity within its limits from all jurisdiction excepting that of her own magistrates, still the possession of a quarter of Antioch, and the envied dignity of patriarch of the Holy City accorded to the Pisans, and the grant of similar distinctions or commercial privileges to the Genoese were calculated to excite alarm in a rival power. To what fearful extent these apprehensions spread themselves we shall hereafter perceive.

Faliero, before the close of his reign, was summoned to the reduction of Zara, which had opened her gates A. D. 1115. to the King of Hungary. The triumph of the doge was complete : he defeated the invaders, and pursued them into their mountain fastnesses ; and, having sufficiently punished the revolters, he was invested on his return to Venice with the title of Duke of Croatia. Within three years, a fresh spirit of disaffection manifested itself, and the Hungarians again advanced. The result was widely dif-

ferent: Faliero was mortally wounded in a battle under the walls of Zara, and the few of his troops who escaped from the field regained their transports with difficulty. The King of Hungary, elated by his success, refused the terms proposed to him, and consented only to a suspension of arms during the next five years.

A. D.
1117.

The resources of the state, however, were too powerful to be impaired by this partial reverse; and the slight disgrace attaching to it was soon to be obliterated by fresh and more distinguished triumphs in the East. There, the second Baldwin, pressed on all hands by the Infidels, solicited the general aid of Christendom; and while his ambassadors were awakening the pious zeal and stimulating the commercial appetite of the Venetians, news of his capture and of the imminent peril of Jerusalem accelerated the succours which they were preparing to furnish. The doge Dominico Michieli commanded an armament which has been estimated at not less than two hundred vessels; and among these were several galleys of more than ordinary dimensions, each banked with a hundred oars and each oar requiring two men to ply it. The Saracen fleet was A. D.
stationed in the bay of Jaffa; and perceiving at first 1122. only a few ships of burden, which Michieli had placed in the van to cover his advance, was unapprehensive of attack. The battle began at daybreak, and an untoward event, in its very commencement, increased the terror into which the Infidels had been thrown by their surprise. The galley bearing the doge himself, being a swifter vessel than its mates, first entered the enemy's line; and, as chance determined, bore down upon the Saracen admiral: the shock was irresistible, and the hostile vessel sank with all its crew. As the conflict became general, the Saracens, dispirited by the loss of their chief, fought every where at disadvantage. Yet their resistance was long and bloody; the two entire lines were engaged ship to ship, and it was chiefly by their desperate resolution in boarding that the Venetians were in the end successful and the enemy was completely destroyed. Some allowance may, perhaps, be made for the rhetorical style of the Archbishop of Tyre when he records the hideous slaughter in this action: the victors, he assures us, however incredible it may sound, stood on their decks ankle-deep in the blood of their foes,

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the sea, for a circuit of two miles (Furherius enlarges this space to four), was tinged with a scarlet die ; and the numerous unburied corpses which floated to the shore bred a contagious disorder by their putrescence. Michieli sullied his victory by the cruel execution of his chief prisoners ; and, leaving his fleet at Jaffa, hastened on in person to Jerusalem, where he celebrated the festival of Christmas. There, sagaciously directing the excitement which his recent victory had produced, he concluded with the council of regency a treaty most advantageous to the interests of his republic. One-fourth of Acre, as we have already seen, had been granted to the Venetians. A new allotment bestowed on them an entire street in each city of the kingdom of Jerusalem, with a bath, a bakehouse, a market, and a church ; all their imports were permitted to pass free from duty ; no taxes were to be paid by them ; and so paramount an authority was attributed to their magistrates, that in all cases in which a resident Venetian was defendant, he was to be tried in his own native courts, and it was solely as prosecutor that he was compelled to appear before a royal judge. In the partition of future conquests, a third of Tyre, Ascalon, and their dependencies, when won (a consequence upon which the sanguine hopes of the crusaders always reckoned), was to be assigned to the Venetians ; who, as some acknowledgment for this territory, were to supply a third of the garrison of Tyre ; but even these troops were to be maintained and paid at the king's expense, who set apart for the purpose 300 golden besants.

His future services thus amply rewarded beforehand, the doge prepared for the field. While the impression of their defeat was recent, it was naturally supposed that the Infidels would feel discouraged ; and that some great enterprise might be successfully undertaken. But to what quarter was this enterprise to be directed ? Forethought was not among the qualities which marked the crusading chiefs ; and it would have been idle to expect that any plan for a future campaign should have been meditated and digested, or that they should even know on what point their foe was most vulnerable. But supernatural guidance, it was believed, was always at hand to supply any defect of human prudence ; and to this decision the Christian fortunes were intrusted. The names of the chief Syrian cities, or at least

of Tyre and Ascalon, concerning which most doubt existed, were written on separate papers and deposited in an urn. This urn was placed upon the altar ; and after the celebration of a solemn mass, an orphan child was employed to draw out the lot which was to decide the march of the crusading hosts. Tyre was the name borne by the fatal scroll ; and no object of greater importance or of greater difficulty could have been selected ; for the joint forces of the sultans of Damascus and Egypt, under able commanders, garrisoned, with no incompetent numbers, the vast circuit of its walls ; and nineteen miles of ramparts bristled with armed defenders. The sea encompassed it on all sides, save where a channel, in its narrowest part more than half a mile in breadth, was crossed by the mole which Alexander had constructed 1400 years before ; and which, if it bore witness that Tyre might in the end be won, proved at the same time the gigantic efforts demanded for its reduction. The conqueror of the world had almost abandoned this city in despair ; nor was it till after seven months of unparalleled toil and the loss of more blood than all Persia cost him, that he entered its breach by storm. But a few years antecedent to the siege now contemplated, the mightiest efforts of the crusaders had been directed against it in vain.

Three months, from the middle of February, were fruitlessly expended in assaults perpetually repulsed. The port, flanked by towers and guarded by a double wall, was not to be forced ; and the mole, yet more strongly intrenched and fortified, gave additional defence to the garrison rather than means of approach to the besiegers. No symptoms either of distress or weakness appeared within the city ; and it was known that the Sultan of Damascus was hastening to its relief. Among the confederates, on the other hand, incessant and, as it seemed, hopeless efforts had produced irritation and discontent ; and a spirit of jealousy began to exhibit itself between the forces employed on the different services. The troops investing the city by land murmured at their unremitting hardships ; and, contrasting their own daily perils and labours with the ease and security of those who were engaged in the blockade by sea, looked with an evil and suspicious eye upon their Venetian allies. This danger was observed, encountered, and remedied by the

promptitude of Michieli ; and history presents few specimens of more chivalrous self-abandonment than that upon which he resolved. Stripping the entire fleet of its equipments, he ordered the rowage, masts, sails, and rudders to be borne with him to the camp. "These," he said, pointing to the burdens of his attendants, "are the pledges of our fidelity and of our participation in dangers which ought to be common to all. We can no longer have it even in our power, if it could be supposed to be in our will, to quit the walls, and the slightest gale will expose us to far greater peril than that of mortal combat !" This substantial proof of sincerity, and the politic advance at the same time of one hundred thousand ducats for the payment of the soldiers, restored confidence at once among the allies. A general voice deprecated the useless exposure to danger which the Venetians proffered, and all hands assisted in refitting the fleet, the active services of which might soon be demanded.

The siege was still vigorously, but not more successfully, pressed ; and two other months passed away without diminution of courage or constancy on either hand, although scarcity began to appear within the walls. Accident, in the end, presented occasion for a fortunate stratagem. One of those carrier-pigeons which the orientals employ as messengers, was seen passing over the camp, and, terrified by a loud shout which the besiegers raised, fell into their hands. The despatch fastened to its wing announced speedy assistance from the Sultan of Damascus ; but it was easy to substitute intelligence of a directly contrary nature, to announce that this chief was hard pressed in another direction, and compelled to abandon Tyre to its own resources. The bird, laden with this forged communication, was released and flew to the city. There the garrison believed the unwelcome news, and hopeless of that relief upon which they had placed their main dependence, surrendered on terms. Ascalon, upon which the Christian arms were next directed, soon afterward fell an easy conquest.

These successes awakened a new and unexpected enemy to Venice. The Greek empire, long conscious of her own weakness, and doubtful whether the hazard to which she was exposed by the Infidels was not less immediate than that which might be apprehended from the establishment of

a powerful European dominion on her frontiers, abandoned herself to the impulses of fear and jealousy ; and, by aiming a blow which she was too nerveless to strike with effect, provoked the very dangers which she sought to avoid. Her cruisers received orders to interrupt the Venetian commerce, and to capture the merchant vessels of the republic wherever they were to be met. It is not disputed that there were yet other causes of irritation ; for Johannes Comnenus, who at that time filled the throne of Constantinople, was among the best and wisest of her princes, and is not likely to have yielded to any rash intemperance of anger. The crusaders, unfortunately, had carried with them to the East the most undisguised contempt for a people whom they affected to consider as barbarians, and had consequently been little solicitous to show respect either to their laws or their religion. Pride was among the most besetting sins of the champions of the holy sepulchre ; and the great share which belonged to the Venetians in the reduction of Tyre, one of the most brilliant exploits of the Christian chivalry, might diminish, even in them, that moderation by which they had hitherto been distinguished, and exchange the deference with which they had been accustomed to regard the court of Constantinople for a manner more conformed to the haughty demeanour of their brethren in arms. Be this as it may, the first avowed hostility was committed by the emperor ; and Michieli lost no time in inflicting reprisals, for which he possessed ready means. His fleet swept and desolated the imperial coast ; and the doge, no longer required before Tyre or Ascalon, proceeded to Rhodes which he sacked and pillaged ; Scio underwent a like fate, and here he fixed his winter-quarters. In the following spring his ravages extended over the whole Archipelago ; when Samos, Paros, Mitylene, Andros, Lesbos, and other islands were visited with relentless vengeance ; and, in pursuance of that detestable traffic of which there are traces in Venetian commerce even before the middle of the eighth century, the choicest youth of both sexes were torn away from those unhappy islands to be sold as slaves. Hence, passing to the shores of the Morea, Michieli spread similar destruction ; and in his homeward voyage, while ascending the Adriatic, he chastised some rebellious towns in Dalmatia, and taught the citizens of Sebenigo, Trau, Spalatro, and Belgrade how dangerous it

was to trifle with fidelity. In this wide-visiting devastation, Michieli appears not to have encountered a single check. Whether on his return to Venice he abdicated his power, or died in possession of it, has been disputed; but it is not doubtful that he had fully earned and merited the expressive title with which the epitaph engraven on his monument commences, *Terror Græcorum jacet hic.*

Under his successor, Pietro Polani, we read of a short and successful campaign against Padua, remarkable A. D. 1143. only as being the first occasion on which the Venetians, already increased in power far disproportionate to their native population, employed mercenaries in their service. Another Comnenus, Manuel, had succeeded to the Greek throne, and the empire was endangered A. D. 1148. by the invasion of Roger of Sicily who had occupied Corfu, pillaged the neighbouring coasts, and, after forcing the Dardanelles, had threatened to burn Constantinople itself. Manuel, in his distress willing to forget recent dissensions, eagerly sought to renew more ancient alliances with Venice; and the republic had powerful motives to assist in repressing an active and ambitious prince possessing a large tract bordering on the Adriatic, and already established in the Levant. The offers of Manuel, therefore, were accepted with a ready ear; for, exclusively of the jealousy with which the Venetians naturally regarded the King of Sicily, they were allured by new commercial privileges which opened to them the hitherto forbidden ports of Cyprus, Candia, and Megalopolis.

Corfu was speedily recovered, but not without occurrences which threatened an immediate dissolution of the alliance, and evinced the insecurity of the basis on which it rested. The camp was a scene of perpetually renewed discord; and on one occasion, the Venetians, worsted in a general fray, retreated to a little island, Asteris, between Ithaca and Cephalonia, whence they attacked and burned many of the Greek ships. Having captured the imperial galley itself, they decorated the state-cabin with drapery of cloth of gold and rich purple tapestries; and selecting a vagabond Ethiopian, distinguished for his ugliness and enormities as a representative of Manuel, they carried him in mock triumph round the fleet and celebrated his coronation. The ridicule was chiefly directed against Manuel's swarthiness of complexion;

and the Byzantine historian, from whom we derive these particulars, is deeply concerned for the honour of his master's personal appearance. "Manuel," says Nicetas, "had not yellow locks like a cornfield; his hue was dark and sun-burnt, yet it was the hue of the bride in the *Canticles*, black, but comely."*

In the early part of the reign of Vitale Michieli II., who succeeded Polani, the disputes between the holy see and the Western empire were agitating all Christendom; and on the first double election to the papedom, the Venetians, anxious to diminish the increasing preponderance of Frederic Barbarossa in Italy, espoused the cause of Alexander III. in opposition to Victor IV., who was supported by the emperor. The troops of Padua, Vicenza, Ferrara, and Verona, under the emperor's orders, immediately laid waste Loreto and portions of the Milanese; and while the Venetian forces were occupied in repelling this aggression, Ulric, the patriarch of Aquileia, profited by their absence to revive an ancient feud. The hatred of the church of Aquileia against that of Grado, which it considered as an unauthorized intruder upon its rights, had been transmitted undiminished through a course of more than six centuries; and Ulric, inheriting this feeling in its uttermost bitterness, gladly seized an opportunity of plundering his defenceless rival. Heading his canons, the patriarch crossed over to Grado, and was conveying its booty to his vessels when he found himself unexpectedly arrested by a Venetian fleet. He obtained his liberty; but it was at a price to which he would, probably, have preferred the most costly expenditure of treasure; for the ransom which he was compelled to pay conveyed his memory in ridicule almost to our own times, and materially contributed to perpetuate the popular Venetian contempt for the spiritual dignity of Aquileia. Every year, on the Carnival Thursday, the patriarch was obliged to send to Venice a bull and twelve boar pigs, a deputation representing himself and his chapter. The ambassadors were paraded through the principal streets, and then slaughtered with mock solemnity in the presence of the dogs, who distributed their carcasses among the people.

A. D.
1156.

* Manuel Comnenus, ii. 5.

The holyday on which this mummerie was exhibited (*Gioredi grasso*, or, as it is called in the Venetian dialect, *Ziobbagrasso*) was celebrated with particular festivity; among other annual spectacles exhibited to the populace was the descent of a *voltigeur* from a rope fixed to the summit of the *Campanile* (a height of three hundred and forty feet) to a balcony in the ducal palace; and some marvellous feats of balancing (*Le Forze d'Ercole*), in which a pyramid of tumblers was raised on each other's shoulders for six stages, in the last of which, the crowning-man stood upon his head. Besides attending the procession of the bull, the doge had a yet more martial duty to perform on this festival. In the great hall of the palace (*La Sala del Piovego*) was arranged some pasteboard scenery representing the castles of such lords of Friuli as had espoused the cause of the patriarch. These fortresses were attacked by the doge and his council, and beaten down by them with clubs; and till the reign of Andrea Gritti, in 1524, each succeeding prince submitted to enact the chief part in this buffoonery. After that time, nothing further was required but that he should be spectator of the bull-bait (for such in latter days it became) from the balcony of the red columns.

But events of a far graver character were impending over Venice. The Sicilians and Venetians were now almost equal objects of alarm to Manuel Comnenus; and, regardless of the widely different relations in which each had recently stood to his empire, he sought to embroil them with each other; and proffered his alliance to that party which would commence the quarrel. The hand of his daughter was tendered to the King of Sicily, and was refused. Nor were the emperor's negotiations with the republic more successful, for her government was well acquainted with the value of a commercial treaty which it had obtained from Sicily, and which had been inviolably observed. The doge, apprehensive of measures of violence to which Manuel might perhaps be hurried by disappointment, issued an order that all Venetian ships and residents should immediately withdraw from the imperial territories; and Manuel, in reprisal for this interruption of commerce, invaded Dalmatia; at the same time disavowing all hostile intentions, and affirming that, upon the re-establishment of former confidential relations, he would not hesitate to coun-

termand his troops. The Venetians, anxious for peace, and imbued more with the spirit of merchants than that of either statesmen or soldiers, fell into the snare ; and no sooner had their traders returned and their vessels re-entered the Greek ports, than the first were thrown into prison and the second confiscated. From Nicetas, we learn that the chief sufferers, under this violent breach of the law of nations, were the provincial residents. Most of those who traded in the capital, especially such as were unmarried, effected their escape ; having embarked by night in a three-masted vessel, the largest which had hitherto been built. The Greeks pursued them with a numerous and well-armed flotilla : yet the Venetians, from the superior loftiness of their ship, from her extreme rapidity of sailing before a fair wind, and, not least, from the courage and gallant bearing of the crew, baffled all attacks, and outstripping their pursuers, gained the Adriatic in safety.

The consternation excited at Venice when this unlooked-for intelligence arrived was to be equalled only by the profound and general resentment which inflamed all ranks. The populace with loud cries demanded war ; the streets echoed with execrations against the Greeks ; and every hand was employed in equipping an armament. One entire family, the Justiniani (Venice contained not a more ancient or more noble house), reviving the self-devotion of the Roman Fabii, volunteered their whole race to the service of their country, and embarked a hundred combatants in her defence. The young eagerly thronged to partake of the dangers of the expedition ; and those too far advanced in years to bear their share in arms, in order that they might retain as little as possible in common with their detested enemy, shaved their beards, in abhorrence of the opposite fashion prevalent among the Greeks. Still, money was wanting to the public coffers ; and the doge, having exhausted every other financial expedient, was obliged to have recourse to a forced loan from the most opulent citizens, each being required to contribute according to his ability. On this occasion, the chamber of loans (*La Camera degl' imprestiti*) was established. To this chamber the contributors were made creditors, at an annual interest of four per cent. ; a rate far below the standard of the age. These creditors, in process of time, were incorporated into a company for the manage-

ment of their joint concerns ; and thus formed the basis upon which afterward was erected the *Bank of Venice*, the most ancient establishment of its kind, and the model of all similar institutions. The method in which the above-named loan was repaid is believed to be the earliest instance on record of the funding system, and the first example in any country of a permanent national debt.

Scarcely three months had expired before Vitale found himself at the head of one hundred and twenty well-manned vessels ; and, fired with the hope of 1171. vengeance, sailed for Dalmatia. There, such cities as had revolted were most severely punished. The lives of the Ragusans were spared, at the intercession of their archbishop ; but it was on condition of subservience in spiritual matters to the patriarch of Grado (provided the papal consent could be obtained), and of the destruction of their fortifications. On the appearance of the fleet off Negropont, the governor of that island approached the doge in lowliest supplication. He represented that the intentions of his master were, undoubtedly, pacific ; that the strong measures which he had taken could have resulted only from false information of hostile designs on the part of the republic ; that he would pledge himself for the most entire and satisfactory atonement ; and that, meantime, it would be far wiser to seek explanation by an embassy than by any hasty violence to plunge both nations headlong into the calamities of war. The artifice of the wily Greek prevailed ; envoys were despatched to Constantinople, and the doge retired to winter-quarters at Scio.

Delay was the sole object of Manuel in admitting this embassy ; and his ministers, deeply versed in the lingering processes of negotiation, continually embarrassed the discussions by new and unexpected questions. Every hour thus gained, if it did not positively diminish the strength of the Venetians, increased that of their opponents, by affording a longer time for preparation ; and, moreover, left an opening for the occurrence of some favourable chance which might altogether remove their danger. Such a chance did indeed occur ; and its consequences, as they far exceeded all calculation, so must they have infinitely surpassed the warmest hopes of the Greeks. The plague broke out in the quarters at Scio ; and when the ambassadors, wearied by repeated

procrastination, and no longer perceiving any clew which might guide them through the ever-lengthening maze of diplomacy, returned to announce their unsuccessful mission, they found the flourishing camp which they had quitted but a few short months before changed into one vast lazaretto. Few of the troops had escaped the deadliest stroke of pestilence, and of those few a very small portion was still able to bear arms. From want of effective numbers to man his fleet, the doge had been compelled to burn many of his vessels ; and the further progress of the enterprise thus became impossible. Happy, indeed, might he consider himself, if he were permitted to regain the *Lagune* with the shattered relics of his host. In the Greek islands, it is scarcely necessary to look beyond natural causes and national habits for the origin of the plague at any time ; but a belief prevailed, which, even if unfounded on truth, at least evinces the bitterness of animosity with which Manuel was regarded, it was affirmed that he had resorted to the treacherous and diabolical expedient of poisoning the waters.

The fleet was exposed to fresh disasters in its homeward voyage. Partly from the weakness of the crews, partly from the unskillfulness of those to whom the pilotage was necessarily intrusted, many ships were abandoned and destroyed, and many others were wrecked. That gorgeous armament, the pride of Venice and the terror of the East, which had so recently filled the bosom of the Adriatic with its swelling sails, now stealthily crept along its coasts, reduced to little more than seventeen unserviceable barks. Not a family throughout the capital was uninvolved in the general calamity. The voice of mourning was heard in every house ; and of those brave hearts among the Justiniani which the bond of patriot love had knit together, as the strength of a single man, not one now throbbed with life. Their resemblance to the Fabii was destined to be complete. Like them, they had given all to their country ; and all had perished for her : as with them, too, a single root was found for their revival. With the Fabii it was a boy, too green for arms, who had remained in Rome : a forgotten monk, drawn from the shade of a cloister and released from his vow of celibacy, preserved to Venice a name which was often again to give lustre to her annals.

Calamity stopped not here ; nor was the plague left behind

with the dead at Scio. The dying conveyed it to Venice, amid whose crowded population it spread most rapidly and destructively. The populace, imbibited by the failure of brilliant hopes, smarting under the keen sense of unrevenged national wrongs, and preyed upon by a frightful disease, sought some object on which to vent the fury engendered by these manifold causes of irritation. In the tempests of the passions, as in those of the elements, it is to the highest places, for the most part, that the thunderbolt directs its stroke ; and the doge was held responsible not only for the political disasters which greater firmness, perhaps, might have averted, but also for the physical evils which it exceeded any human power to control. His palace was beset by a ferocious rabble ; and Vitale, having fruitlessly attempted in the first instance to appease and then to escape from the tumult, fell beneath the rage of his own citizens. The state, maddened by sedition, stained with the blood of its prince, and desolated by pestilence, appeared to tremble on the utmost verge of destruction. It had, in truth, arrived at one of those great crises in the history of nations, of which the result is either total dissolution or reinvigoration with more than former strength.

CHAPTER II.

FROM A. D. 1173 TO A. D. 1192.

New Constitution—Dissension between Pope Alexander III. and the Emperor Frederic Barbarossa—Siege of Ancona—Heroic Exploits and Constancy of its Citizens—Its Relief—Alexander III. at Venice—Defeat of Barbarossa's Fleet—Espousal of the Adriatic—Peace of Constance—Submission of the Emperor to the Pope—Privileges granted by Alexander to Venice—The Red Columns—Procuratori di San Marco—Avvogadori.

A.D.

DOGES.

1173. XL. SEBASTIANO ZIANI.

1178. XLI. ORIO MALIPIERI—abdicates.

The frequent convulsions which it has hitherto been our task to record in the government of Venice had not only given birth to numerous factions, but, as a still more fatal consequence, had materially impaired that reverence for authority which "hedges in the majesty of princes," and is among their truest and surest defences. So rudely and artificially was the framework of the Venetian polity constructed, that it seemed not to admit any repair without a ruinous disjunction of all its parts; and the sole remedy for the unsoundness of a single member was found in an operation which endangered the whole fabric. The chief fault arose from the unmeasured excess of power with which the doge had originally been invested. Wholly irresponsible and unchecked, it is little a matter of surprise that this magistrate frequently abused his colossal strength; and whenever he did so, revolt and violence were the only resources open to the oppressed, who had not yet been gifted with more gentle and more legal weapons from which they might derive protection.

One authority only, besides that of the doge, appears to have been recognised at this early period; a tribunal of whose origin and positive duties little can now be told, but

which, from the number of its members, bore the name of *the Forty* (*I Quaranta*). Whatever might be its usual functions (which probably seldom exceeded those of judicial administration), being the only permanent body known to the state, it possessed for the moment, at a season of anarchy like that which succeeded the assassination of Michieli, a most important and paramount influence ; and this influence was exercised, during the short duration of power now afforded it, in producing an entire change in the elements and constitution of government. The XL. may be considered as representatives of the chief families in Venice ; and, as such, no less averse from a popular than from a despotic sway, equally hostile to the rule of the many and of one. It was to strike at the root of both these forms, and to raise in their stead the domination of its own *caste*, that the efforts of this body were now successfully directed.

Hitherto the choice of a doge had been vested, either ostensibly or virtually, in the suffrages of the whole assembled people. In many instances it is plain that the prince was elected by acclamation ; and even if superior worth or wealth, or secret influence of any other kind, at any time enabled a candidate to dispense with the strict form of soliciting votes at a general assembly, it was not till he had been presented before the citizens, had solemnly sworn to govern them discreetly and justly, and had been carried in the seat of honour (*il pozzo*) round the *Piazza di San Marco*, to receive their gratulations of assent which supplied the direct tendering of votes, that he was conveyed to the palace and circled with the ducal *corno*, or *berretta*,* at the head of the giants' stairs. This licentious and irregular process, which, while it bore some outward semblance of liberty, was in truth adapted to assist the views of factious and ambitious individuals, was now abolished for one by no means better calculated to establish genuine freedom. A law was

* The ducal bonnet is probably of Eastern origin. The ball with which it terminated was a diamond of great price, in the centre was an inestimable ruby, and it was bordered with a rich edging of pearls and other jewels. Every thing connected with Venetian etiquette was emblematical of some mystery : thus the *corno* was not placed on the head of the newly elected doge till he had ascended the last step of the giants' stairs ; in order to show that he could not arrive at the highest dignity without having passed step by step through all the lower charges of the state.

passed, transferring the right of election into the hands of a select few. Eleven citizens were named by whom this choice was to be determined ; and, in the first instance, they fulfilled their duties nobly, and distinguished themselves by a signal instance of high-minded abstinence and integrity. To render any election complete, a majority of nine voices out of the eleven was required ; and these were found united in favour of one of their own body, Orio Malipieri. Far, however, from coveting the proffered sceptre, he modestly pleaded his own incapacity to administer it, and urged his brethren to look again for some one of more vigorous faculties and of wealthier fortunes.

Sebastiano Ziani, the citizen whom he named as uniting both these qualifications, was approved and presented as their future sovereign to the people, by A. D. whom this invasion of their former privileges was 1173. neither resented nor opposed. Perhaps this tranquillity arose from the jealous precautions which had been directed no less against the preponderance of the chief magistrate than of the populace ; for the prerogative of the new doge had been most materially curtailed before he was advanced to his dignity. To escape the necessity of any frequent convention of the general assemblies, always tumultuous and inefficient for the discharge of public business, a great council of four hundred and eighty members was proposed as a substitute for these larger meetings, which, though not immediately suppressed, were thus stripped of all essential power, and gradually fell into desuetude. This council, formed indiscriminately from the mass of citizens, was to be renewed annually, and its appointment was to be vested in twelve electors, themselves chosen annually ; two from each of the six districts (*sestieri*) into which the capital had been divided ; for it was only on the deficiency of sufficient numbers in Venice itself—a case not very likely to occur,—that the other islands were invited to assist with a supply of members for any department of government. From this body, too unwieldy, as it was conceived, for ordinary discussions, a committee of sixty, under the title of a *senate*, was appointed to assist the doge, on the same principle as those advisers, the *pregadi*, whom it had hitherto been customary that he should nominate and summon at his own will on occasions of great moment. A *granta* of twenty-five or

thirty assistants, whose commission ceased at the termination of the matter on which they were summoned to deliberate, was sometimes added to the senate ; and in the year 1435 its numbers were doubled by the establishment of a permanent *giunta* of sixty. In the end, by the admission of certain magistrates who during their period of office were entitled to seats, the senate amounted to three hundred members. To complete the executive, each district of the city now also appointed one member of a more private council, which together with the doge formed what was termed the *signory*. Among these six magistrates the supreme authority became virtually divided ; for without their advice and concurrence the orders of the doge were to be wholly null and disregarded. The *collegio*, in which these powers were ultimately lodged in after-times when the constitution became matured, consisted of twenty-six members ; the doge, his six counsellors, the three *capi di quaranta*, and sixteen *savii* of different classes chosen by the senate. Of these three great divisions of government the grand council may be considered as possessing the sovereignty, the senate as forming the deliberative body, and the *collegio* as administering the executive department. These various innovations were introduced before the election of Ziani ; and as they seemed to demand a more formal sanction than they could receive from the XL., to whom they owed their birth, the first act required of him after his accession was a solemn abandonment of the former unlimited prerogative and a recognition of the new laws. The great change by which Venice had formerly passed at one step from democratic equality to despotism was not effected more rapidly or more tranquilly than her present transition from despotism to oligarchy. Each succeeding year, as we shall perceive, diminished the small remnant of power which the doge was permitted to retain ; and henceforward he must be considered as little else than the first puppet of the state, whom the leading families were content should be tricked out with a title and a crown for purposes not of government but of pageantry.

Ziani succeeded to a troubled throne. In the East the terror which Venice once inspired had died away in consequence of her recent great naval disaster ; and Manuel, with that ferocity which cowardice for the most part ex-

hibits when relieved from alarm, had wreaked his vengeance upon the state before which he had hitherto trembled, by acts of personal cruelty inflicted upon such of her subjects as their unhappy chance placed within his grasp. To one of these outrages (if it be true, the most atrocious he could commit) we shall have occasion to revert hereafter. All of them were regarded silently by the Venetians; among whom the growing spirit of commerce was fast extinguishing the purer love of national glory. Peace was necessary for the continuance of their oriental traffic; and for this gainful but ignoble boon they did not hesitate to offer the most ignominious sacrifices. Nevertheless their solicitations were received with coldness, and perhaps would have been wholly rejected, had it not been for the respect extorted by their allies; and it was only in order to avert any hostility which the King of Sicily might be encouraged to threaten at the suggestion of the Venetian merchants, that Manuel agreed to pay them a compensation for the property which he had confiscated.

The state of Italy was no less a subject of anxiety than that of the East. On the death of Pope Adrian IV.,^{A. D. 1159.} the Christian world, as we have already hinted, had been scandalized by a schism in the pontificate; and a double election called two successors to infallibility and the chair of St. Peter. Victor IV., though nominated by the suffrages of only two cardinals in addition to his own vote, found a more powerful support in the arms of the emperor Frederic Barbarossa than he could have derived from the unanimous voices of the whole sacred college: and his competitor, Alexander III., the more legitimate vicar of Christ, after having been exposed to personal outrage during his attempted investiture and subjected to a short imprisonment, was indebted for his liberation to a tumult of the Roman populace by whom he was befriended. Chased from Rome, Alexander passed the greater part of his future life in suffering and exile; yet the persecution of the emperor, constant dependence upon the precarious bounty of foreign princes for safety and frequently for subsistence, renewed disappointments, perpetual defeats, the threatening aspect of his enemies, the imbecility, if not the infidelity, of his friends—none of these evils had shaken his uncompromising firmness of purpose: and

the same fearless energy which enabled him, while surrounded by all these difficulties, to contend with, to triumph over, and to disgrace our English Henry, was in the end to place the emperor Barbarossa equally under his spiritual dominion. Not long after the commencement of the feud between the pope and the emperor, the chief cities of Lombardy, oppressed by the yoke of Barbarossa, formed a league against him ; and the power of this alliance was greatly increased by the failure of an attempt on Rome, which he had undertaken in order to secure a new election to the pontificate. A. D. 1167. It was towards the end of July that he had commenced this siege, and the pestilential vapours of the Campagna, exhaled during the greatest heats of summer, in the autumn began to spread frightful ravages among his troops. The disease commonly resulting from *malaria*, so destructive to the natives themselves, raged with far greater fury amid strangers unaccustomed to the climate ; and imagination was busy in representing this contagion as a special judgment from Heaven, in reprisal for that sacrilegious daring which had violated the chosen seat of religion. The rude soldier who during the heat of battle shrank not from any deed, however ferocious, now, when enfeebled by sickness, looked back with superstitious terror upon the impiety which had fired the church of Sta. Maria ; and considered the slow poison of the marshes, under which his strength was wasting away, as a Divine visitation for the overthrow of the images of the Redeemer and of St. Peter, which he had levelled in the sacred precincts of the Vatican. The ecclesiastics were far from backward in encouraging a delusion so friendly to their authority ; and these physical and mental causes, when in combination with each other, produced a result more to be dreaded than all the open hazards of war. Frederic beheld his army perishing insensibly, untouched by the sword. The most illustrious of his companions in arms had fallen by an unseen stroke. Almost all the chief officers of his court, princes and names allied to princes, the leaders of both the great factions, the Guelphs and Ghibelins, by which his native dominions were agitated, and whom with consummate prudence and dexterity he had united under himself in his present enterprise, had become victims to the pestilence ; and more than two thousand cavaliers of noble blood, together with a pro-

portionate number of their followers, swelled the amount to a fearful total. No hope was left but an instant abandonment of these plains of death. Taking hostages, therefore, from the Romans, and gathering the few troops which survived, he hastened through Tuscany, and retreated on Pavia. There, in spite of the superior number of the hostile Lombards by whom he was surrounded, he maintained himself during winter without exposure to the unequal risk of a battle; and in the following spring, perceiving that his strength must be regained not in Italy but in Germany, he withdrew in secret and in disguise with a handful of attendants.

The league of the free cities had gained much additional strength by Frederic's discomfiture; and it required a preparation of five years before he could venture to renew hostilities against them. During that period it might be supposed that the alliance of Milan, Brescia, Mantua, Bologna, Padua, Treviso, and Verona, if it were only from their vicinity, must have presented strong attractions to Venice, hitherto a neutral spectator of the contest; and it is not without surprise that we find the republic entering upon the war for the first time under the banners of the emperor. Ancona was not a party to the Lombard league; but the protection which she received from Manuel Comnenus gave umbrage to Frederic, and her commercial prosperity, connected with this alliance, excited the jealousy of the Venetians: so that when Christian, archbishop-elect of Mayence and arch-chancellor of the empire, to whom Frederic had delegated the conduct of his affairs in Italy, determined to attack that city by land, the Venetians promised their assistance in the blockade of the port. The chronicler Buoncompagno, who has detailed the occurrences of this siege,* can scarcely find language sufficiently opprobrious in which to express his abhorrence of Christian. He speaks of him as a kite gorged by rapine, and as a crow every where snuffing the fumes of carrion and glutting himself on destruction.

The bold promontory which shelters Ancona on the north is inaccessible from the sea; and the city itself, reclining on the sides of a hill which forms a semicircular bay, offers

*Apud Muratori VI.

even from the land but one approach to its beautiful and tranquil amphitheatre. The entrance to the port is guarded by a superb mole; a work of Roman magnificence, formed of huge stones, bound together by iron, and rising to a considerable height above the level of the sea: a marble arch of triumph, which still forms its entrance, records the memory of its founder Trajan. Yet the defence afforded by this mole to the harbour was by no means complete, either against man or the elements. One wind, the *focarese*, seldom arose without occasioning much damage to such vessels as trusted to their anchorage; and the fortifications were so inefficiently constructed, that the Venetian galleys were able without risk or opposition to moor themselves in the face of the very quays. Meantime the German army ravaged the neighbouring territory, and succeeded in not only destroying all means of sustenance, but in gradually circumscribing the garrison, which at first attempted more active warfare in the field, within the narrow compass of its walls. The city was ill prepared for a siege which had not been foreseen; and, in addition to the evils likely to arise from want of precaution, the ordinary supplies had proved deficient from a bad preceding harvest. Unable to elude the strict blockade of the Venetians, the garrison felt the pressure of famine soon after their investment; but they maintained themselves with equal constancy against this fearful want and the often-renewed assaults of their enemies. No military operations appear more favourable to deeds of individual bravery than those of a siege; and Buoncompagno has noted several incidents of exalted heroism. On one occasion, while an attack from the Germans occupied the attention of the whole garrison, the Venetians also effected a landing on the opposite quarter, and were advancing towards the city, when by a vigorous charge, not of regular troops, but of such inhabitants as lived nearest the shore, they were repulsed and driven in confusion upon their military engines. Rallying under these, they were protected by a sleet of stones and arrows, which appeared to forbid the eager hope of their pursuers, who at first threatened to fire the beleaguered works. But the check was not of long continuance. Reckless of all danger and as if bearing a charmed life, a woman, widowed, perhaps, during the siege (her name deserves remembrance,

it was Stamura), rushed forward with a lighted torch. Her peril was scarcely less from the weapons of her own countrymen than from those of her enemies; yet amid both, unconcerned and uninjured, she set fire to a lofty wooden tower, nor quitted its base till the flames had gained such a height as made its destruction certain. The conflagration spread rapidly along the lines, and the whole train of engines, the formidable but unwieldy artillery of those ages, was consumed to ashes.

Nor was this the sole loss of the Venetians. Among their ships employed in the blockade was one distinguished for its enormous bulk, and known on that account by the appropriate name of *the World* (*Il Mondo*). Upon the deck of this gigantic vessel towers of vast dimensions had been constructed, and it was regarded as the keep and stronghold of the naval position. A priest of Ancona, forbidden by his vows from mingling in the ranks, yet thirsting for some occasion by which he also might evince his affection to his country, resolved to attempt the destruction of this galley. Being an expert swimmer he gained the prow, bearing an axe between his teeth, before he was perceived, and succeeded in cutting through the cables which moored the ship to her anchorage. Then, rapidly diving under water and rising only at intervals as he needed breath, he regained the shore, unharmed by the missiles which pursued him, amid the shouts and admiration of his exulting friends. The huge ship drifted among its lesser mates, endangering them by its own peril. It was saved after the loss of all its engines and much of its stores and lading; but during the alarm and confusion seven other galleys were stranded and perished. Meantime, a repulse of the Germans from the walls afforded a welcome supply of food to the besieged; the flesh, and even the entrails of several horses which had been killed being seized and devoured with avidity by the starving garrison.

As the famine pressed more sorely, the Anconitans despatched one of their citizens, a man of assured discretion, to offer Christian the payment of a large sum of money on condition that he would abandon the siege. The negotiation was conducted in the oriental style of apologue. The arch-chancellor, on receiving the proposition, asked, in reply, whether that person would not deservedly be reputed a

fool, who, having secured the whole of a prize, consented to receive but a part of it? "Listen," he said, "to this tale. A certain hunter, with numerous dogs, beat about a forest which was the haunt of a lioness, the terror of her neighbourhood. After he had pursued her for some time, not without the loss of many of his hounds and much injury to his hunting tackle, he held her at bay in a cave from which there was no possibility of escape, and wherein she must needs perish by famine. The lioness, reduced to extremity, offered terms, and proposed to surrender one of her paws if she might be permitted to go free. Tell me now, would the hunter do wisely if he were to let the lioness loose for the sake of her paw?"—"In my opinion," replied the envoy, "the hunter should not accept the paw singly; but if the lioness would deliver the tips of her ears as well as her paw, then he should consent to treat; for in that case he would shortly have her whole body at command. But in return, let me call to your recollection the greediness of the fowler, who, having spread his net and scattered his grain for pigeons, observed no less than seven of them flock to the bait. Looking round him, however, he forbore from pulling the strings at the moment, in the idle hope of bringing together the numerous birds which he saw on the neighbouring trees. But while he was awaiting this large booty some hawks appeared in sight, and the pigeons, satisfied with their meal, flew away unharmed. Would not the fowler, think you, have done better if he had been content with the seven pigeons in hand, rather than lose all by speculating upon the multitude in the bush?" The arch-chancellor was steeled against this parabolical logic, which instead of convincing only tended to irritate him, and he dismissed the ambassador with angry denunciations of vengeance.

Ancona indeed had little prospect of escaping from his grasp. The misery to which she was reduced may be estimated from the returns made by commissioners instructed to search for food, in order that it might be applied to the public service. Their utmost exertions, after carefully exploring the most secret hiding-places in which the avarice of want might be supposed to treasure up its hoards, produced no more than five pecks of various grain. Yet the city at that moment contained no less than twelve thousand

souls within its circuit. Food the most disgusting at other times had been greedily coveted and was exhausted. Even the *skins* of animals whose very *flesh* is commonly rejected as unclean, the wild-herbs which grew on the ramparts, the seaweed which was reputed poisonous,—all these had been tried, and all had now failed. Whatever may be the constancy of his endurance, there is still a limit to the physical powers of man; and it cannot be a matter of wonder if nature sometimes gave way under this accumulated and hourly-increasing wretchedness. A sentinel, worn with hunger, fatigue, and watching, had sunk upon the ground at his post, when a young and lovely woman of the noblest class in the city, bearing an infant at her breast, observed and rebuked his neglect. He replied that he was perishing from famine, and already felt the approach of death. "Fifteen days," answered the more than Roman matron, "have passed, during which my life has been barely supported by loathsome sustenance, and a mother's stores are beginning to be dried up from my babe: place your lips, however, upon this bosom, and if aught yet remains there drink it, and recover strength for the defence of our country!" The soldier, shamed and animated by her words, and recognising and respecting the dignity of her birth, no longer required the proffered nutriment. He sprang from the ground, seized his arms, and rushing into the enemies' lines, proved his vigour by slaying no less than four combatants with his single hand.

One other, and a yet more touching instance of the self-devotion of female affection may be produced, in striking contrast with the unnatural deed recorded of the phrenesised mother of Jerusalem, under circumstances of similar destitution and horror. A woman of Ancona, heart-broken by the exhaustion of her two sons, and hopeless of other relief, opened a vein in her left arm; and having prepared and disguised the blood which flowed from it with spices and condiments (for these luxuries still abounded, as if to mock the cravings of that hunger which had slight need of any further stimulant than its own sad necessity), presented them with the beverage: thus prolonging the existence of her children, like the bird of which similar tenderness is fabled, even at the price of that tide of life by which her own was supported.

The only slender hope now remaining to the besieged was founded upon the possibility of communicating with the Guelphs of Ferrara and Romagna; and at length, notwithstanding the vigilance of the blockade, three chosen messengers passed undetected through the Venetian fleet, and received prompt assurances of such relief as they could furnish, from the Countess of Bertinoro and from Marcheselli, upon whose pity they had thrown themselves. Still the wretched citizens, in addition to their former miseries, were doomed for many days to the bitterness of suspense; and Christian, having obtained intelligence of their application, endeavoured to extinguish this last spark of hope by forging letters from Marcheselli, which stated the impossibility of raising adequate supplies, and recommended them to surrender even at discretion. Either the fraud was detected, or the firmness of the besieged prevailed over their despair; and meantime their faithful ally, at the head of such troops as he could assemble at the moment, hastened through the territory of Ravenna, eluding the forces which might have intercepted his march. On the fourth night, he gained the summit of Falcognesa, whence Ancona may be despaired, almost at its foot. There, ordering every soldier to bind to the head of his lance as many lighted torches as he could dispose around it, and extending their ranks as widely as his numbers permitted, he deployed slowly from the mountain. The stratagem succeeded. Christian was dismayed at the long and glittering lines of light which approached him; and supposing that he was attacked by a much superior force to his own, abandoned his works in precipitate retreat and hurried to Spoleto. The Venetians, unable or unwilling to maintain the blockade without his support, withdrew at the same time from the harbour; and Ancona, by a deliverance for which she had little dared to hope, was freed from both her enemies.

In the contest between Frederic and the Lombards during the next three years, the Venetians do not appear to have been sharers. The part which they had already taken in the siege of Ancona must be attributed far more to a petty mercantile jealousy than to any cordial espousal of the interests of the emperor; and as soon as he felt strong enough to re-enter Italy in warlike guise, they again adopted their wise and ancient policy of discouraging, so far as in them

lay, the establishment of so dangerous a power in their own neighbourhood. For this purpose they became united to the Lombard league, though without active co-operation ; for it was not till they had boldly asserted the cause of Alexander III. that they became involved in positive hostilities with Barbarossa.

Neither the chronology nor indeed the very events of the period which we are approaching are without perplexity : but of the flight of Alexander to Venice, and of the occurrences to which it led, we shall speak as the Venetians themselves speak ; for although these incidents have sometimes been disputed, they appear to rest upon little less sound authority than that adduced for most other facts of a date equally remote. By denying them, we should tear a bright page of glory from the history of Venice, and contradict a testimony to which the most willing, if not the most implicit, credence is usually yielded,—the testimony afforded by numerous works of art. The walls of that which once was the palatial residence of the doge still bear witness to the triumph of Ziani, the humiliation of Frederic, and the proud revenge of Alexander ; and the most illustrious pencils of the great Venetian school of painting have conspired to give immortality to deeds which we are reluctant to consider otherwise than true.*

According to these representations, we find that, during the emperor's abode at Pavia, Alexander attempted to negotiate. The boldness with which his legates advocated their master's cause was worthy of his own unbroken spirit ; and Frederic, either touched by their fearless dignity, or more probably awed by the undisguised approbation with which they were received by his assembled court, dismissed them, if not with encouragement, at least with respect. The breaking up of the congress proved the insincerity of these demonstrations ; and Alexander, pursued by the uttermost extremity of Frederic's hate, inter-

* Numerous authorities respecting the visit of Alexander III. to Venice and the victory over Otho have been collected by Girolamo Barti, a Florentine painter, who, towards the close of the sixteenth century, was employed to replace the pictures representing these events, which had been destroyed by fire. See *Vittoria Navale della Rep. Ven. contra Othonem, &c. 1563*; and also *Historia della venuta a Venezia documentata nel 1177, di Papa Alessandro III., e della Vittoria ottenuta da Sebastiano Ziani Doge, &c. comprebatas da D. Fortunato Chino, Castiglione.*

dicted from fire and water, and forbidden reception by any one on pain of death, resolved to abandon the continent; and it was to Venice alone, safe from her peculiar locality,

that he could look for an asylum within the range of
A. D. Italy. Embarking, in disguise, at Benevento, he
1177. was driven by contrary winds to the coast of Dalmatia; and, after a short stay at Zara, he crossed over to the *Lagune*. There, uncertain of his reception, it is said that he passed the first night in the porch of a convent;* and during the three following days, more effectually to conceal his person, he submitted to a menial occupation in the kitchen of the monastery, till he was recognised and made known to the doge. Ziani received him with the veneration due to his holy office; soothed his misfortunes by unbounded marks of respect; and encouraged his hopes by despatching an immediate embassy to Frederic, requiring an acknowledgment of his pretensions. The haughty reply of the emperor is preserved to us by Sabellico. "Return," he said, "and acquaint your prince and senate, that Frederic, the Roman emperor, demands from them a fugitive and a foe. Unless they forthwith deliver him to me in chains and as a captive, I denounce war against them. No treaty, no law of nations shall avail in their defence, if they refuse; and neither God nor man shall avert my revenge. I will press them both by sea and land; and, little as they may expect such punishment, I will not stop till I have planted my victorious eagles on the gates of St. Mark's!" On the receipt of this answer, no choice remained but an ungenerous abandonment of the pontiff, through fear, or a preparation for immediate hostilities. The decision was made unhesitatingly; and although the republic could oppose not more than half their number to the sixty-five galleys which Pisa, Genoa, and Ancona had placed under the command of Otho, the emperor's son, yet Ziani boldly set sail to encounter them. He confided, perhaps, in the virtue of the pontifical blessing; and assuredly not less in the keen edge of that good sword with which the hands of the holy father had condescended to gird him at the moment of his embarkation.

* This belief is strengthened by an inscription at the door of the monastery of San Salvatore, in the Meroeria, not far from the Rialto
ALEXANDRO III. PONT. MAX. PERNOCTANTI.

The fleets met off the Istrian coast between Pirano and Parenzo ; and the Venetians, having gained the wind, disregarded the superior numbers of their opponents. After a vigorous contest of more than six hours' duration, two galleys destroyed, forty-eight captured, and a still more important prize, Otho, the emperor's son, were the fruits of their victory. On the return of the conquerors to Lido, Alexander in person hastened to receive his benefactor, and to acknowledge his debt of obligation ; and a solemn ceremony, which continued to be celebrated so long as the republic existed, dates its origin from his gratitude. As soon as Ziani touched the land, the holy father presented him with a ring of gold. "Take," he said, "this ring, and with it take, on my authority, the sea as your subject. Every year, on the return of this happy day, you and your successors shall make known to all posterity that the right of conquest has subjugated the Adriatic to Venice, as a spouse to her husband!" Of all the privileges with which the Venetians were ever gifted, this papal grant appears to have been cherished by them with the most tenacious pride. The Adriatic is now widowed of her lord ; but during the long course of more than six hundred years, every fresh return of the feast of Ascension witnessed the renewal of her figurative nuptials. The doge and his *clarissimi* having heard mass in the church of San Nicolo, embarked on board the gorgeous Bucentaur,*—a state galley, blazing with gold, enriched with costly ornaments, and preserving such fanciful identity with the original fabric, as could be obtained by perpetual repair without total reconstruction.† Gliding through the canals, amid festive shouts and triumphal music, this superb pageant arrived at the shore of Lido, near the mouth of the harbour : and there the princely bridegroom, dropping a golden ring into the bosom of his betrothed, espoused her with this brief but significant

* Some very absurd etymologies of this name are noticed by Duru ; such as the augmentative particle *Bu* and *Centaurus*, the name of an ancient ship ; or *Bis Taurus*, the name (on what authority we know not) of the ship of *Aeneas* ; or a corruption of *Ducenorum*, sc. *remorum*. Casaubon, before Duru, has pointed to an offering made by the Syracusans to the sea, of an earthen vase filled with honey, flowers, and frankincense, which, the learned commentator says, reminds him of the Venetian custom. (*In Atheneum*, xi. 2.)

† Howell's *Letters*, book i. 6 i. letter 3.

greeting, "We wed thee with this ring, in token of our true and perpetual sovereignty!"

Once, and once only, a future pope expressed a doubt as to the origin of this ceremony; and he received a confirmation, which, if it did not satisfy, must at least have silenced him. When Julius II. inquired of the Venetian ambassador Donati where this grant of Alexander was to be found, he was instructed to look for it on the back of the donation of Constantine. The Venetians themselves, however, were not always content with a date which they thought comparatively recent. Marco Foscarini* has claimed a much earlier birth for the espousal of the Adriatic; and he finds traces of it in Dandolo's Chronicle, under the dogeship of Pietro Urseolo II. towards the close of the tenth century.

But a far heavier calamity than the rout of his fleet had now humbled the arrogance of Frederic, and so totally had he been defeated by the Milanese at Legnano, that many days elapsed after the battle before it was ascertained that he still lived. Humbled on all sides, he no longer refused to treat; and it was resolved that conferences should be opened at Venice, for the adjustment of the claims of the Lombard cities, and the settlement of the pontificate. The result was a truce for six years with the former, and the acknowledgment of Alexander as pope. To add solemnity to this treaty, Frederic expressed a wish that he might ratify it in person; but, while he remained under excommunication, it was a mortal sin in any one to hold communion with him. The pope freed the Venetians from these spiritual difficulties, by removing the anathema; and on the 24th of June, the emperor landed on the *piazzetta* of St. Mark. The doge, attended by his train of state, his councils, the senate, and all the other members of his court and government, received him on his disembarkation, and escorted him to the gates of the cathedral. There, surrounded by the imposing splendour of ecclesiastical pomp, clothed in his pontifical vestments, the triple crown glittering on his brow, himself alone seated, amid a brilliant throng of cardinals, prelates, and ambassadors, who stood around, Alexander, severely tranquil, awaited the approach of his no longer formidable enemy. The emperor, as he drew near, uncovered

* *Della Letteratura Veneziana*, lib. ii. p. 216.

his head, cast aside his purple mantle, and, prostrating himself before the holy father's throne, crept onward that he might kiss his feet. The wrongs of twenty years flashed across the remembrance of the pope. He had been hunted like a partridge on the mountains ; unthrone, dishonoured, exiled, proscribed, a price set upon his very life ; and the persecutor, from whose impious violence he considered himself to have been shielded by that especial Providence which watched over his sacred office, was now humbled beneath him in the dust. He may be forgiven, if, in a moment so trying to self-restraint, he was unable to suppress his strong feeling of exultation. Planting his foot on the neck of the prostrate emperor, he repeated the words of David, "Thou shalt go upon the lion and the adder ; the young lion and the dragon shalt thou tread under thy feet !!"*—"It is not to you, it is to St. Peter!" murmured the indignant prince ; and the reply cost him a yet further humiliation. Alexander trod a second time, more firmly, upon his neck, exclaiming, "It is both to me and to St. Peter!" A square stone of red marble, in the vestibule of St. Mark's, still denotes the spot on which this singular and memorable reconciliation took place.† On quitting the cathedral, the emperor conducted Alexander to his horse, assisted him to mount, and held his stirrup. He would even have waited on his bridle, and have performed the lowly duties of an esquire, but the good taste or the satiety of the holy father forbade these further marks of subjection.

It would have been an easy task to follow the customary track in relating the above narrative ; to have declaimed against the haughty bearing, as it is termed, of the pontiff ; and to have placed, in strong contrast with his pride, the meekness and humility of that heavenly Master whom he professed to represent on earth. But are such pictures just? The pride, if we are so pleased to term it, of Alexander was not a low and petty feeling, which regarded his own individual aggrandizement, but it sprang from a contemplation of the holy guardianship with which he had been invested. He believed (fervently, sincerely believed)

* Psalm xci. 13.

† —— in that temple-porch
The brass is gone, the porphyry remains.

Rogers.—Italy, "St. Mark's Place."

that he was the vicar of his Saviour; and that, by the injuries which he had endured in his own person, that Saviour had been injured also. It is not the reasonableness nor the truth of this belief that is now advocated; but if the motive once be granted (and there seems no other which could have supported Alexander unbroken and undismayed through the long struggle of his persecution), the acts which flowed from that motive will be divested of much of the inviolousness which has sometimes been imputed to them. His first address to Frederic was couched in the words of Scripture, and spoken as by one endued with the delegated authority of Christ: nor was it till the oppressor attempted to separate the man from the pontiff that he indignantly repulsed this infringement upon his rights, and identified himself with the apostle.

One other triumph still remained for the aged pope. He saw his competitor for the tiara renounce it at his feet, in the halls of the Vatican; and on his joyous return to his capital for this purpose, he was accompanied by Ziani. No court was better versed than that of Rome in the politic art of giving value to its "cheap rewards;" and distinctions were lavishly showered upon the Venetian prince, which derived their chief price from their very want of substance. In imitation of the custom of the holy see, he was permitted to affix a leaden instead of a waxen seal to all documents which received his sign-manual; and, for this grant, an amusing reason has been given—*Ut Veneti senatus gravitatem in diplomatis prædicaret*—that his official instruments might evince the weight of the Venetian senate.* Certain envied symbols of sovereign power were also accorded to him; and henceforward, a lighted taper, a sword, a canopy (*umbrella*), a chair of state, a footstool covered with cloth of gold (both of which last he was privileged to use even in the pontifical chapel), silver trumpets, and embroidered banners announced the presence of the doge. To his subjects at large, as a mark of general favour, a plenary indulgence was granted, on the condition of hearing mass and confessing themselves in the church of St. Mark on the morning of the feast of Ascension.

The peace of Constance completed the arrangements

* Amelot de la Houssaye, 585.

which the treaty of Venice had begun ; and its ratification placed the republic in a far more eminent rank ^{A. D.} 1178. among European powers than she had yet attained. She was hailed as the liberator of Italy, and the protector of the holy see. Through her aid the imperial yoke had been cast away ; and, by the discomfiture of Frederic, while she freed herself from a dangerous neighbour, she received the applause and gratitude of the Lombard cities for the recovery of their independence. In her relations with the East, a like ascendancy had been won ; not so much through increase of strength in Venice as through the rapidly accelerated decline of the empire : and, on the death of Ziani, the alliance which, when proffered five short years before, was coldly listened to and only not rejected, was now in turn solicited with ardour and purchased by concession.

It was in this reign that the two magnificent granite columns which still adorn the *piazzetta* of St. Mark were erected on their present site. They were among the trophies brought by Dominico Michieli on his victorious return from Palestine in 1125 ; and it is believed that they were plundered from some island in the Archipelago. A third pillar, which accompanied them, was sunk while landing. It was long before any engineer could be found sufficiently enterprising to attempt to rear them, and they were left neglected on the quay for more than fifty years. In 1180, however, Nicolo Barattiero,* a Lombard, undertook the task, and succeeded. Of the process which he employed we are uninformed ; for Sabellico records no more than that he took especial pains to keep the ropes continually wetted, while they were strained by the weight of the huge marbles. The government, more in the lavish spirit of oriental bounty, than in accordance with the calculating sobriety of European patronage, had promised to reward the architect by granting whatever boon, consistent with its honour, he might ask. It may be doubted whether he quite strictly adhered to the requisite condition, when he demanded that games of chance, hitherto forbidden throughout the capital, might be played in the space between the columns ; perhaps

* Doglioni fixes the erection of these columns in 1178, Sabellico in 1174, the common Venetian Guide-books a few years later. The Abbote Garascio, writes the name of the engineer Statatoni.

with a reservation to himself of any profits accruing from them. His request was granted, and the disgraceful monopoly became established ; but afterward, in order to render the spot infamous, and to deter the populace from frequenting it, it was made the scene of capital executions ; and the bodies of countless malefactors were thus gibbeted under the very windows of the palace of the chief magistrate. A winged lion in bronze, the emblem of St. Mark, was raised on the summit of one of these columns ; and the other was crowned with a statue of St. Theodore, a yet earlier patron of the city, armed with a lance and shield, and trampling on a serpent. A blunder, made by the statuary in this group, has given occasion for a sarcastic comment from Amelot de la Houssaye. The saint is sculptured with the shield in his right hand, the lance in his left ; a clear proof, says the French writer, of the unacquaintance of the Venetians with the use of arms ; and symbolical that their great council never undertakes a war of its own accord, nor for any other object than to obtain a good and secure peace. The satirist has unintentionally given the republic the highest praise which could flow from his pen. Happy, indeed, would it have been for mankind, if governments had never been actuated by any other policy ! De la Houssaye informs us also that the Venetians exchanged the patronage of St. Theodore for that of St. Mark, from like pacific motives ; because the first was a soldier and resembled St. George, the tutelary idol of Genoa.

It may be doubtful whether the high office of *Procuratore di San Marco* was first created, as has sometimes been said, under the reign of Ziani ; but the treasure of the saint had so much increased in that doge's time, and his own additions to it were so liberal, that the appointment may be esteemed then first to have attained the importance which it ever afterward preserved. In the outset, there was but a single *procuratore*, afterward we find three, and then permanently nine ; in yet later times the dignity became venal, and fifty might be counted at once. Even then, however, the two classes of *procuratori* by merit and *procuratori* by purchase were carefully distinguished. Occasionally, the honorary title was given to eminent foreigners who had been enrolled in the golden book. Although this dignity was the second in the republic, the *procuratori*, as such,

were not entitled to seats in the great council, and even in the senate they were not allowed to originate any proposition. During the session of the council, two of them were stationed in the clock tower to watch over the safety of its members. Their appointment was for life, and the chief privilege which it conferred was exemption from the burdensome charge of embassies. They were lodged in a stately palace in the *Piazza di San Marco*, they were obliged to hold three audiences in each week, and they were not allowed, without express permission from the great council, to be absent from the city more than two days in any one month. Their chief duties were to superintend the cathedral and treasury of St. Mark, to take the legal guardianship of orphans, and to act as public executors to any Venetian who chose so to appoint them. So great was their consideration at one time throughout Italy, that, from every district, wards were consigned to their protection; and of all the magistrates of Venice they may be esteemed to have been the most independent and untainted by intrigue, because, by their exclusion from the great council, unless they held the coveted office of a *savio grande*, they had no inducement to court popularity, by cringing to their brother nobles for support.

The accession of Orio Malipieri, the citizen who had declined the throne on the death of Michieli, was marked by certain new changes in the form of election. The great council appointed four commissioners, each of whom named ten electors, and on the choice of these forty depended the future doge. Three magistrates also were instituted, about the same time, under the title of *avvocadori*, whose ostensible duties were to represent and to watch over the public interests, in opposition to any possible undue claims which might be advanced by the ambition of the executive. In the courts of justice, they acted as checks upon the administration of law, and as public accusers; in the councils, they vigilantly superintended the course of debate; and without the presence of at least one of them no act of any session was considered valid. The police of the capital was intrusted to their care; the disbursements for public functionaries passed through their hands; they were the guardians of all legislative documents, and of the registers by which the legiti-

A. D.
1178.

macy of the nobles was avouched through the entries of their marriages and births.

Few events marked the reign of Malipieri; a revolt at Zara produced an unsuccessful expedition, and the colony for a while threw off its dependence upon the republic. Fourteen years of power had not diminished the love which the doge always felt for privacy; and profiting by a moment of peace, during which he might relinquish his burdensome charge without hazard to his country, he withdrew to a monastery. The great events of the succeeding reign demand a separate portion of our narrative.



Emblems of Frederick Barbarossa:—1. From his Seal. 2. From a Bas-relief on the Porta Romana, at Milan.

CHAPTER III.

FROM A. D. 1192 TO A. D. 1204.

Enrico Dandolo—Fourth Crusade—Conquest of Constantinople.

DOGE.

A. D.
1192. XLII. ENRICO DANDOLO.

If the period upon the relation of which we are about to enter is among the most splendid which the annals of Venice offer to the historian, it is also among the most difficult which it can fall to his lot to record: not so much from the variety and richness of the materials presented to his hand, as from the glowing and gorgeous texture into which they already have been woven by the skill of a consummate artist. To attempt to rival Gibbon's brilliant, yet most exact, narration of the fourth crusade were a presumptuous and a hopeless task. In no other portion of his great work has he more advantageously displayed his extraordinary powers; and in no other is he, for the most part, so free from his peculiar blemishes, and—would that it were unnecessary to add—from his far more weighty faults.* To transcribe pages familiar to every reader is superfluous: to imitate them would be but to exhibit our own inferiority. In treading on the same line, therefore, we shall, as much as possible, avoid a servile coincidence with Gibbon's steps; and, while borrowing largely from the older authorities upon which, in common with ourselves, he must have relied, we shall carefully remember that our concern is principally with the Venetians.

The choice of the electors fell upon Enrico Dandolo;

* Notwithstanding this richly-merited praise, we think Siemondi's fourteenth chapter far more valuable than Gibbon's sixtieth. The former narrates vigorously what the latter is often content only to imply.

and, were it not for the glory of his reign, it might be supposed that the nomination of a prince enfeebled A. D. by the burden of eighty-four winters, and almost 1192. wholly deprived of sight, afforded full evidence either of the incompetency or of the interested designs of those by whom he was chosen. We have already spoken of the outrages committed, some years before, by Manuel Comnenus, upon the Venetian residents at Constantinople. Dandolo was at that time ambassador from the republic ; and one of the statements respecting his defect of sight attributes it to the cruelty of the emperor, who, with his own hands, applied hot plates of iron to the eyeballs of his victim. Another and a more probable account* refers this partial blindness to a wound received in battle. It is with surprise that we find so few memorials of the earlier career of one who raised for himself so proud a monument of glory in his decline ; yet, save this single doubtful occurrence, nothing further is to be related of Dandolo till he was called to the sovereignty of Venice. In that high office he first manifested his vigour by promptly avenging an insult which the Pisans had offered to the republic, in the seizure of Pola. He attacked and discomfited their fleet, and abstained from further retaliations only at the urgent request of the pope, whose views were directed to the rescue of the holy sepulchre by a vast confederacy of all the European powers.

Fulk, a priest of Neuilly, a village not far from Paris, had roused afresh the dormant spirit of Christendom. The zeal of his preaching and the repute of his miracles attracted the attention of Innocent III., who at that time filled the chair of St. Peter, and who saw in him a fit instrument for the accomplishment of his favourite object. For this purpose, he authorized the curate of Neuilly to direct himself to the announcement of a new crusade, in which every one who engaged, but for the short space of a single year, should be absolved from all the sins which he had committed and confessed. The project was entertained with ardour, especially by the chief nobles of France ; and among the most distinguished soldiers who assumed the Cross may be named Baldwin, Count of Flanders and Hainault, Louis, Count of Blois, and Thibaut IV., Count of Champagne.

* Villehardouin § 34.

The last-named had an hereditary claim to distinction in Palestine ; for his father had been among the bravest champions in the second crusade, and his elder brother had worn the crown of Jerusalem. At an assembly held by adjournment at Compeigne, plans of ad. 1200, A. D. vance to the Holy Land were discussed ; and the long train of calamity wherein their predecessors in the like sacred course had been involved deterred the barons from repeating a painful and circuitous march by land. It was resolved, therefore, to proceed at once by sea ; and for means of transport, it became necessary to apply to the Venetians, at that time the most powerful of the maritime states. Two envoys were chosen by each of the above-named counts to conduct the negotiation ; and these ambassadors, furnished with undoubted credentials and plenary authority, crossed the Alps, and hastened with all diligence to Venice, where they arrived during the first week in Lent. Geoffrey de Villehardouin, Marshal of Champagne, 1201. A. D. who was employed on this important service, has left a minute account of his diplomacy, and of the subsequent expedition. It is by his narrative that we shall permit ourselves, for the most part, to be guided, and wherever they can be introduced, we shall employ his very words.

The letters of credence with which the envoys had been intrusted required the doge and senate of Venice to place as entire confidence in these representatives as in the barons themselves by whom they were deputed. Dandolo accordingly received them with distinguished honour, and acknowledging that, with the exception of crowned kings, the princes who had sent them were the most powerful in Christendom, he demanded their object. They answered by requesting an assembly of the council before which it might be declared ; and in an audience granted four days afterward they thus expressed themselves :* “ Sir, we are come to thee from the most potent barons of France, who have put on the sign of the Cross to avenge the wrongs of Jesus Christ, and to recover Jerusalem, if such be the will of God ; and because they know that no nation has the

* In this, and in our following very copious usage of Villehardouin, we have copied from the pleasing and accurate translation by Mr. T. Smith. London, Pickering ; and Leicester, 1820.

power of you and your people, they implore you, in God's name, to look with pity upon the Holy Land, and, by supplying them with ships and means for their passage thither, to join with them in avenging the shame of our Redeemer." "On what conditions," demanded the doge? "On any conditions," replied the envoys, "which you may think proper to impose, provided they are within our power." "Certe," said the doge, "the request is no slight one, and the enterprise itself is of vast magnitude: we will return you an answer in eight days; and wonder not that we ask so long a time, for a thing of this importance needs much deliberation."

At the expiration of the time appointed, the doge announced the conditions on which he would assent to the proposal: prefacing this declaration with a statement which proves that it was not yet considered safe to neglect the body of the people, in the decision of important questions of state. Provided he could obtain the concurrence of the great council and of the commons of the city, he agreed to furnish palanders* for the transport of four thousand five hundred horses and nine thousand esquires; ships for four thousand five hundred knights and twenty thousand sergeants† on foot. Nine months' provisions were to be supplied to this armament, at the rate of four marks for every horse, two for every man. The engagements were to continue in force for one whole year, from the day of departure from the port of Venice, into whatever realms the service of God and Christendom might lead them; and the sum demanded for this assistance was eighty-five thousand marks.‡ As an allurement to the completion of the bargain, Dandolo promised to equip, in addition, fifty galleys for the love of God, and free of expense, but with this important reserva-

* *Palander* is adopted from the translation of Vignere, and has been sanctioned by Gibbon, who says the word is still used in the Mediterranean. The original is *auissier*, from *auis*, a door, and implies a flat-bottomed vessel, constructed purposely for the transport of horses, from the ports or doors of which a sort of drawbridge could be let down at pleasure, for their ingress and egress.

† *Sergeant* is the original French word. *Servientes* is explained by Ducange (*ad v.*) to mean all horsemen who are not knights.

‡ The treaty is given by Dandolo, x. 3, *apud Muratori*, xii. 223. Simondi (ii. 383) estimates the mark = 50 livres; ∴ 85,000 marks = 4,250,000 livres French = 170,000*l.* sterling.

tion, that so long as the alliance continued, all conquests made by land or sea should be divided equally between the contracting parties.

The ambassadors demanded a single night for the consideration of this truly mercantile offer; and on the morrow they assented to it. The proposition was then submitted to the different bodies whose consent was deemed necessary. In the end, the general assembly was convoked; and in the presence of more than ten thousand citizens, the mass of the Holy Ghost was celebrated in the cathedral of St. Mark, where God was implored to inspire them to do his pleasure in respect of the demands of the ambassadors. When the mass was over, the doge sent to the ambassadors, desiring that they would humbly move the people to the conclusion of the treaty. The ambassadors accordingly repaired to the church, and were eagerly regarded by those who had not yet beheld them; while Villehardouin spoke by consent for the rest, and said, "Signiors, the most high and powerful barons of France have sent us to Venice to implore you to look with pity on the Holy City, which is in bondage to the Infidels, and for God's sake to join with them in avenging the wrongs of Jesus Christ. They turn to you because they know none others so powerful on the seas, and they have enjoined us to kneel at your feet until you have granted their prayers, and have compassion upon the land over the sea." The six ambassadors then fell upon their knees, with many tears, and the doge and the people waved their hands, and cried aloud with one voice, "We consent, we consent." The acclamations and tumult were so great that it seemed the earth shook; and when that great heart-moving cry, which exceeded all human experience, had subsided, the doge mounted the pulpit and spoke to the people as follows: "Behold, signiors, the honour which the Lord has shown you, in disposing the bravest warriors upon earth to seek your alliance, in preference to that of all other nations, in so high an enterprise as the rescue of the tomb of our Lord."

Babylon, not the city on the Euphrates, but Cairo, to which that name was applied, was proclaimed to be the destination of the armament; and the feast of St. John, in the following year, was named as the day of assemblage at Venice. After abundance of holy tears and reciprocal pledges of fidelity, the ambassadors departed, having first raised a loan

of two thousand marks, which they paid the doge as an earnest, and also to enable him to commence his preparations. Meantime each party informed Innocent of their proceedings, and received his glad approval of the treaty. At the moment of according this confirmation, as if with sagacious foresight of the ills which were about to succeed, he expressly prohibited them from arming against any Christian powers, unless compelled to do so by direct violence or other unavoidable necessity ; and even in such cases they were instructed to apply for the previous sanction of the apostolic see.

Villehardouin returned joyously to his master's court at Troyes, where an unexpected calamity well nigh frustrated all his hopes. Count Thibaut was languishing in sickness ; but as if renovated by the cheerful intelligence of which his marshal was the bearer, and fired with true knightly spirit, he called for his horse to ride forth, which for a long season past he had not done, and rising from his bed he mounted him for the last time. Before his death, wherein he showed himself of all men the most exemplary, he bequeathed the treasure which he had provided for the pilgrimage to his servants and men-at-arms, of whom no prince of the age had braver or greater numbers ; and he ordained that each one, as he received his bounty, should swear upon the holy Gospel to repair to the camp at Venice, according to his engagement. Great was the shame of many by whom this vow was broken.

By the death of Count Thibaut, the crusaders of Champagne were left without a leader ; for though Blanche of Navarre, his widow, was pregnant of a son at the time of his decease, she had not hitherto borne male progeny. That son, a gallant and valiant knight, was destined to obtain yet higher celebrity by his wit than by his prowess ; and the royal troubadour, whose deeds of arms are forgotten, still lives in the refined and tender *lais* which he devoted to the praise of Blanche of Castile ; a princess, whose beauty, virtues, and high descent are familiar to an Englishman, through the tribute which, in later years, they received from Shakspeare.*

The Duke of Burgundy and the Count of Bar-le-duc were

* King John, Act II. Scene 2.

successively and ineffectually entreated to assume the command of the forces. It was then offered to Boniface, Marquis of Montferrat, a knight already distinguished in a former crusade, and numbered among the conquerors of Acre. The parliament invited him to Soissons, and there, in the abbey-yard of our Lady St. Mary, weeping and kneeling at his feet, they prayed him, for the love of God, to assume the Cross, to become their chief in place of the departed count, and to receive his treasures and his vassals ; and he, kneeling also, declared that he freely received them. Then the Bishop of Soissons, and Fulk, the holy preacher, with two ecclesiastics of Montferrat, conducted him to the church of our Lady, and placed the cross upon his shoulder.

Between Easter and Pentecost, the gathering commenced at Venice, and great numbers of the crusaders encamped on the island of San Nicolo. Baldwin had ^{A. D.} 1202. already arrived, but the Count of Blois was still absent, and much consternation was excited by a rumour, which proved true, that many of the pilgrims, mindless of the engagements contracted with the doge, were preparing means of voyaging from other ports. By these secessions, not only was the armament deprived of much numerical strength, but those knights who abided by their stipulations were rendered unable to pay the sum for which, jointly with so many others, their words were pawned. Villehardouin was despatched to Pavia to urge the Count of Blois to hasten onward. By prayers and exhortations he prevailed upon several who were about to embark elsewhere to betake themselves to Venice, where Louis and the barons who accompanied him were received with great joy and festivity, and a more goodly or a braver assembly no eye had ever beheld. On the part of the Venetians, fulfilment had equalled, if not outrun, their promises. So gallantly was the fleet which they had prepared equipped, that Christian man had never seen its equal ; and the ships, the galleys, and the palanders were in such numbers, that they were thrice too many for the diminished host of the crusaders. " Ha ! " exclaims Villehardouin, with lively and well-justified indignation, " what a curse it was that so many sought other ports, and came not to join the army, for then had Christendom been exalted, and the land of the Infidels subdued."

The day of payment arrived, and the Venetians, being

fully prepared to sail, called upon the barons for the sum stipulated in the treaty. Many of the crusaders had already exhausted their whole capital ; others were reluctant to contribute more than the proportion for which they had agreed ; and it is plain that no inconsiderable numbers existed in the camp who were already wearied of the rash vow by which they had bound themselves, and who anxiously sought a pretext for breaking up the expedition altogether. In this unlooked-for difficulty, the generosity of the chief leaders was exercised without bounds. Whatever money they possessed, whatever more they could borrow, all precious articles contributing to their luxury, their jewels and rich vessels of gold and silver were delivered to the doge. Still, notwithstanding these great sacrifices, much more than a third of the contract remained unpaid ; for thirty-four thousand marks were yet wanting. The hopes of those who wished for the dispersion of the armament were elated to the utmost, and they looked confidently to the abandonment of the design ; but God, says Villehardouin, who confounds the crafty, ordained it otherwise.

The Venetians, according to the strict terms of their agreement, would have been justified in retaining the sum already paid ; for it was forfeited by the non-completion of the treaty. But the eyes of all Christendom were upon them. Such a step was forbidden by honour ; and partly owing to that recollection,—partly, it may be supposed, to some share in the enthusiasm of the crusaders,—but, more than either, to a well-grounded anticipation that they would be far greater gainers by prosecuting than by terminating the expedition, they proposed an equivalent for the loss which they must encounter by a delay of immediate payment. The defection of Zara and the unsuccessful attempt for its recovery have already been noticed. Would the barons, in the first instance direct their arms against Bela, King of Hungary, under whose protection that revolted colony had placed itself ? Zara was on their route down the Adriatic ; it was so situated, that if left behind it might at any time intercept the communications between Palestine and Europe ; above all, its subjection was the sole condition upon which the republic would permit her fleet to sail. The great obstacle to this proposal arose from the solemn injunction delivered by the pope, that they should

avoid collision with any Christian power. By attacking the King of Hungary, who himself had assumed the Cross, they would be guilty of a voluntary infraction of these orders ; and the reluctant pilgrims and the cardinal legate, who was present in Venice to superintend the expedition, urged this argument with vehemence. But the ardour of the barons and the firmness of Dandolo prevailed. The former plausibly contended that the holy father could never have designed to include a rebellious city within his protection ; the latter displayed the same calm but unbending resolution which ever marked the policy of the Venetian government in its transactions with the Vatican. He contested the pope's right of interference, and added, that if the cardinal chose to accompany the expedition, he might embark as a preacher of the crusade, but not in the character nor with the assumed powers of legate. The Romish envoy angrily returned to his sovereign, and his absence, weakening the party which he espoused, secured the triumph of its opponents.

Much of the year had been worn away in these discussions, and all things were now prepared for the embarkation. The Marquis of Montferrat, both on account of his station and his fame, had been nominated to the chief command of the land forces, but that of the fleet was still to be determined. The barons and pilgrims had assembled to hear mass in St. Mark's, on the first Sunday after the ratification of the new agreement ; when, before the commencement of the service, they were surprised by seeing the aged doge ascend the tribune, and by hearing from him the following address : " Signiors, you are associated with the bravest people upon earth, for the highest enterprise which mortal man can undertake. I am a very old man, feeble in health, and have more need of repose than of glory : yet, knowing none more capable of guiding and commanding you than myself, who am your lord, if it be your pleasure that I should take the sign of the Cross to watch over and direct you, and leave my son in my place to protect our country, I will cheerfully go, and live and die with you and with the pilgrims." The Venetians, on hearing this speech, cried aloud with one voice, " We beseech you, in God's name, to do as you have said, and go with us." Descending from the tribune, Dandolo cast himself upon his knees

before the high altar, and shedding holy tears, fixed the cross on his ducal cap. His son was named regent during his absence ; and many of the illustrious Venetians followed the example of their sovereign.

It was on the 9th of October, 1202, the octaves of St. Rhemigius, that the fleet bearing the warriors of the fourth crusade unmoored from the harbours of Venice. A nobler armament, says Villehardouin, fired at the remembrance, never sailed from port. The ships and palanders of the barons filled as they were with arms and provisions, knights and sergeants, the shields suspended along their sides, the gay streamers blazoned with the cross in the separate national colours of the various pilgrims, and displayed on the summit of the turrets wherewith the decks were crowned.* —“ Before God,” exclaims the delighted chronicler, “ it was a most glorious prospect ! ”† Nearly five hundred sail stemmed the Adriatic ; and fifty of these were galleys, among which the giant *Mondo* towered above its mates. Forty thousand troops were distributed in two hundred and forty transports ; while seventy stout vessels were freighted with stores, provisions, and stupendous artillery, which included three hundred perrières, mangonels, and engines of every other description necessary for the assault of cities.

Many days were lost in waiting for a favourable wind, many others were employed in touching at Istrian ports, so that their voyage was far from rapid, and a month elapsed before they cast anchor off Zara. On the 10th of November, the eve of St. Martin, that city was in sight, and they perceived it to be enclosed by lofty walls and towers, so that nowhere could a fairer, stronger, or more wealthy place be found. When the pilgrims beheld it, they were astonished, and said to each other, “ How can we expect to take such a city, unless the Lord himself assist us ! ” The swiftest vessels, having outsailed their companions, arrived towards sunset ; and in the morning, which was bright and clear, the galleys and palanders and the ships which were behind joined them, took the port by force, breaking the strong chain at its entrance, and approached the land in such order that the harbour lay between the city and themselves. Then

* Gibbon, who has paraphrased this part of the narrative, transfers it to the subsequent passage from Zara to Constantinople.

† *Ha dies tant bon i' ot mis.* § 38.

might you have seen many a knight and many a sergeant leap from the galleys, and many a good steed and rich pavilion landed from the palanders. The army encamped, and on St. Martin's day commenced the siege, although the Marquis of Montferrat was not yet at his post. Villehardouin informs us that he was detained by his own affairs; but the narrator of the *Acts of Innocent III.* attributes this leader's absence to a prudent deference to the pope, by whom he had been personally warned against this expedition.

The Zaraites, terrified at their investment by this mighty host, and anxious to escape the horrors of assault, on the first day communicated with the doge, and offered the surrender of their city and all its possessions, on the sole condition of personal security. Dandolo refused to treat separately, but hastened to lay the welcome proposal before his allies, by whom it was readily accepted. Meantime, during his absence in the council, some of the factious, who wished for the disbandment of the army, assured the deputies who were awaiting his return, that, provided Zara could defend itself from the Venetians, she need not apprehend hostilities from the other confederates. Deluded by this representation, the messengers returned to the city without receiving Dandolo's reply. The doge, on re-entering his pavilion to adjust the terms, was surprised to find it deserted by the Zaraite envoys; and this surprise was succeeded by indignation, when the Cistercian abbot, de Vaux, informed him of the cause; adding, at the same time, "Lords, by authority of the Apostle of Rome, I interdict you, who are Christian pilgrims, from attacking this Christian city." The interference of the meddling priest availed him little, for the barons shared the just indignation of Dandolo, when he represented to them the treachery which had been practised. They declared it to be a notorious outrage; that not a day passed in which those by whom it had been perpetrated did not seek to compass the ruin of the army; and that everlasting shame would be their portion, unless they assisted the Venetians in the reduction of the city. In conformity with this decision, on the following morning they pushed on to the very gates, constructed their works, and planted their engines under the walls; while at the same time the towers towards the sea were battered by huge stones cast from the ships. Five days were spent in

unremitting attacks ; on the 6th, so much of the wall had been undermined that the Zaraites abandoned all hope of longer resistance, and renewed their former offers of surrender. The chief citizens, by whose influence the revolt had been planned and executed, despairing of pardon, quitted the city during the confusion which succeeded, and found safety in exile. The submission of the revolted colony did not save it from pillage ; and the spoil was equally divided between the Venetians and the French.*

This success was opportune ; for winter was too near at hand to permit hope of more distant operations. The city afforded very seasonable quarters ; and its maritime half was occupied by the Venetians, the remainder by their allies. But their harmony was soon interrupted. One of those frays which frequently arise from the mutual jealousy of different nations in combined armies, threatened their destruction on the third evening after their possession of Zara. The conflict began about the time of vespers ; when men from all parts ran to arms, and the combat was so hot that the streets were filled with swords, lances, crossbows, darts, and multitudes of wounded and dead. The Venetians, fewer in number than their opponents, gave way with considerable loss. The barons armed themselves and endeavoured to restore order ; but no sooner was one place quieted, than the tumult broke out in another. The greater part of the night was passed in alarm ; and several days elapsed before the joint exertions of Dandolo and the crusading chiefs succeeded in completely restoring tranquillity.

The arrival of the Marquis of Montferrat occurred soon after this untoward quarrel. He was accompanied by a numerous reinforcement ; and it is probable that the ensuing spring would have beheld his followers on the shores of Palestine, had not a most unlooked-for proposal diverted their arms yet longer from the original object of their expedition. Hence arose results, in strict accordance, indeed, with those great ends which our eyes, enlightened by subsequent events, now perceive that the crusades were designed to promote ; but such as were removed at the time far beyond the bounded horizon of human foresight, and which

* Such is one of the charges which Innocent, in his letter to the barons, brings against them. Ramusio, on the contrary, says, *Ita Jadera Galli curilio capta, solius Veneti preda ex pacto fuit.* Lib i. p. 43.

have not always been steadily contemplated, even in retrospect. For the fuller comprehension of the events which we are about to relate, it is necessary that we should briefly trace some revolutions in the Greek empire, during a few years preceding the date at which we have already arrived.

Since the unhappy expedition of Vitale Michieli in 1171, the story of Venice has separated itself from that of Constantinople; but fearful events had stained the annals of the latter court during the progress of those thirty years. The reign of Manuel Comnenus, though abounding with that species of glory which is won by the personal heroism of the sovereign, had exhausted the resources and diminished the strength of his empire. His son, Alexius II., at ten years of age, succeeded to a precarious throne, from which he was speedily hurled by the vigour and the crimes of his kinsman Andronicus, who consummated his treachery by the murder both of the unhappy youth and his injured mother. The horrors of that tyrant's sway were closed by an insurrection, in which, as far as a single life could atone for the destruction of thousands, his own cruel death and protracted sufferings might be accepted as repayment. With him terminated the male dynasty and the glory of the Comneni. Isaac Angelus, who overthrew him, was descended from the females of the same line; and in his nerveless and unworthy hands, the fabric of the empire which had been preserved entire amid accumulating peril by the superior intellect, notwithstanding the crimes, of his predecessor, crumbled insensibly away. Cyprus was wrested from him by a tributary; Bulgaria and Wallachia asserted independence, and obtained an acknowledgment of their native kings. The unwarlike and luxurious emperor owed his personal security to the contempt of those revolted barbarians; for they were well content that the sceptre should be administered by one whose indolence and weakness afforded them sure pledges of peace. Though safe from foreign violence, he was still exposed to domestic treason; and a brother, Alexius Angelus, deprived him both of his throne and sight. The son of the deposed prince, another Alexius, was spared, however, by the usurper. After a while he found means to escape, having crossed the Archipelago, and visited both Sicily

and Rome, he proceeded towards the court of Philip of Suabia, King of the Romans, and husband of his sister Irene, the widow of Tancred, King of Sicily. On his passage through Verona, he was astonished by the great throngs which were hastening to the camp at Venice ; and listening to the advice of those faithful attendants who had shared his dangers and escape, he sent a communication to the assembled barons, praying their assistance in the deliverance of his father and the recovery of his crown. Villehardouin thus reports their answer : “ We comprehend your proposal : we will send some of our people with your master to King Philip to whom he is going ; and, if he is willing to assist us in the recovery of the Holy Land, we will aid him in regaining his territories, which we are aware are unjustly withheld from him and his father.” So ambassadors were despatched to the Valet* of Constantinople, and to Philip King of Germany.

The reply of Philip and Alexius arrived soon after the occupation of Zara. The Duke of Suabia, though unable, on account of his differences both with the pope and the King of France, to afford personal assistance, consented to resign his brother-in-law into the hands of God and of the crusaders ; and the Prince of Constantinople himself was lavish in promises. The reward which he would bestow, he said, should be the richest which any people had ever received, and the barons should have effectual assistance in the deliverance of the Holy Land. He engaged, after his restoration, to put an end to the schism which distracted the Greek and Latin churches, and to bring back the whole empire of Romania to its former spiritual allegiance to St. Peter. Two hundred thousand marks of silver and provisions for the whole army were to recruit their exhausted resources. He himself would accompany them to Babylon ; or, if they preferred it, he would equip, at his own charge, ten thousand men for a year’s service, and would maintain during his whole life five hundred knights, as standing guardians of Palestine. “ Lords,” concluded the ambassadors, “ we have full powers to ratify this treaty, if on your part you are favourably inclined ; and surely, as such offers

* Villehardouin, p. 36. *Valet* was the ordinary appellation of the children of a noble house. Ducange, on the authority of Pithou, considers it to be a diminutive of *vassus*.

were never made to any people before, those who reject them can have no great passion for glory."

Vehement debates succeeded these proposals. The Abbot de Vaux and the party in the interest of Rome pertinaciously refused them. The French, on the other hand, with no less ardour espoused the cause of Alexius, who was remotely allied to their own princes. The Venetians remembered their long debt of hatred against the Greeks, and calculated, not only upon its full payment, but upon the chances of much additional gain. Even those leaders with whom the deliverance of Palestine still remained the chief and primary object of desire consented to this previous enterprise on grounds of policy. Syria, they said, was not to be won, in the first instance, upon its own shores; and they who would become permanent masters of the sepulchre of Christ must, beforehand, assure themselves either of Egypt or Asia Minor.

Another motive has been assigned for the eagerness with which Dandolo advocated this diversion from the original purpose of the expedition. Malek Adel, the Sultan of Damascus, is said to have contemplated with very reasonable apprehension the assembly of the Christian armament at Venice; and by a secret negotiation with the doge, the opportune payment of a large bribe, and the assurance of a free trade to Alexandria, to have obtained a promise that he would either postpone or frustrate the intention of the crusaders. The continuator of the chronicle of William of Tyre states even the singular method by which the sultan obtained the money needed for this purpose. He assembled at Cairo all the Christian priests of the neighbouring country, and informing them that a new armament was gathering in Europe, he commanded them forthwith to provide arms, stores, and horses for his service. The bishops replied that their sacred function forbade them from intermeddling with war. "Be it so," replied the despot, "if you decline fighting in person, you must furnish men to fight in your place!" and having demanded an account of their revenues, he confiscated the whole property to his own use. This plunder of the Christian church was employed in the corruption of those who had avowed themselves the champions of the Cross.

The wishes of the majority of barons prevailed; nor
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were they opposed by all the ecclesiastics. The Marquis of Montferrat, the Doge of Venice, the Counts Baldwin, Louis, and of St. Paul confirmed the treaty, swore to observe its provisions, and affixed their seals. The discontented party remonstrated in vain, and many of them, either openly or by stealth, abandoned their comrades.

A. D. 1203. Reginald de Montmirail, a potent baron of France, requested employment on an embassy to Syria, and did not scruple to swear, with his right hand upon the saints, that he and his knights would re-embark within fifteen days after they had completed their mission. He sailed, but never returned. Simon de Montfort enlisted under the banner of the King of Hungary, himself a crusader, whom he had so recently opposed at Zara; but he atoned for this inconsistency by good service afterward in the Holy Land. Others there were who shrank from the prospect of danger as they approached nearer to its encounter, and secretly withdrew from their ranks. Few of them, however, obtained the safety which they coveted: the boors of Sclavonia cruelly massacred one party which attempted to gain their homes by land; and of five hundred others, who threw themselves into a merchant-ship, not one survived its wreck.

These frequent desertions were observed with much apprehension by the chiefs, and in order to remove one cause of discontent, and to quiet those superstitious fears which in many instances had alienated their followers, they resolved to make their peace with Innocent, whose commands they had transgressed. Their apology was founded on the plea of necessity. "The barons," they wrote, "implore your forgiveness for the capture of Zara, which, owing to the falsehood of those who have passed on to other ports, they were reduced to undertake, in order to keep their host together; and they assure you, as their father, that whatever you may command, they are, in all respects, ready to obey." It is plain that the Venetians, even if they had been so inclined, could not join in these excuses without falsehood. They had not been the subjects but the creators of the necessity thus advanced as a plea; and but for them Zara would have been untouched. Of the sincerity with which even their confederates now humbled themselves at the feet of the pontiff a sufficient estimate may be formed,

when we call to mind that they well knew the fresh enterprise upon which they had engaged was yet more strongly disapproved by Innocent than that which they were seeking to extenuate.

As yet, however, the pope was unacquainted with the existence of the new treaty entered into by the barons who thus solicited his absolution ; and he replied to them in a tone of gentleness little merited either by their past or intended disobedience. He answered that he well knew the treachery of others had compelled them reluctantly to the course which they had adopted, and that, softened by their repentance, he assoiled them from the sin. For the time to come, they must direct all their energies to the recovery of the Holy Land, and hasten onward to its shores without further delay. If the Venetians, as yet untouched by remorse, would seek his forgiveness, *they* also should be included in the absolution ; and the confederates might then sail together in entire mutual confidence. If, on the contrary, they should unhappily persist in their contumacy, nevertheless, from the urgent necessity of the case, he would permit the barons to employ the ships of that still excommunicated state ; but they must, in all ways, as far as in them lay, endeavour to separate themselves from such enemies of God.

Unchanged by these remonstrances, the Venetians continued their eager preparations for vengeance upon the Greeks. In addition to other causes of enmity, they were deeply jealous of the superior ascendancy which the Pisans, their great commercial rivals, had been permitted to acquire in Constantinople ; and against Alexius personally they entertained an inveterate animosity, because he had refused to discharge the arrears (200,000 golden besants) of the indemnity which had been promised by Manuel, to compensate the outrage of his confiscation. On the morning after the celebration of Easter, the allied forces quitted their cantonments in Zara, and encamped on the seashore. Then, in order to strike profound terror into their rebellious colonists, to chastise their past revolts, and to prevent a repetition of them in future, the Venetians, in defiance of Innocent's renewed protection, razed the walls of the city to the ground. Meantime, the young Alexius arrived, and was welcomed with great joy. All things were prepared for the

voyage ; and the general ardour with which it was undertaken was by no means checked by the receipt of a second mission from Innocent to the barons, severely denouncing their fresh guilt, prohibiting the design in which they were engaged, and, not unreasonably, expressing doubts of the sincerity of that repentance which they had so lately pretended, and for the sake of which he had relieved them from spiritual censures. He concluded by noticing the recent pillage of Zara, the spoil of her churches by the Venetians, and the willing participation of the counts in that sacrilegious booty.*

Notwithstanding this denunciation the fleet set sail. As it touched at Durazzo, Alexius received an acknowledgment of fealty from that city, the western key of the empire ; and thence, with a fair wind, the confederates passed on to their appointed rendezvous in Corfu. There, disembarking, they refreshed their men and horses in rich and plenteous quarters (the fabled gardens of Alcinous and his Phaeacians) for more than three weeks. The landing of Alexius was marked with distinguished honours ; numbers of brave knights and sergeants bestrode their war-horses and went out to swell the pomp of his entry. His pavilion was pitched in the midst of the camp, and the Marquis of Montferrat, to whose care he had been especially confided, raised his own by its side.

Their repose, however, was interrupted by fresh intestine discontents. Conscience or cowardice awakened alarm in more than half the army, and many knights entered into a secret compact to remain in the island, and suffer those who wished it to proceed on the perilous undertaking which themselves had opposed from the beginning. The chief leaders, upon learning this conspiracy, acted with great promptness. Taking with them in their train the Prince

* Ramusio, with a feeling little in accordance with that generally entertained by his countrymen for the supremacy asserted by Rome, has endeavoured to extenuate their disobedience by one of the most barefaced violations of truth which ever flowed from the pen of an historian. *Denide vero, pia causa suorum, Innocentius III. Pontifex Maximus, pios milites hortabatur, ut Ecclesiam Græcam ejusque Patriarcham Constantinopolitanum, de sanctiore patrum curriculo deflectentem, in viam reducerent. Itaque bellum, Constantinopolitanum, quod sine summa impunitate repudiari non poterat, a Veneto et Gallo, summis opibus, et eundem pariter abscitate susceptum.* (Lib. I. p. 8.)

of Constantinople and all the ecclesiastics, they repaired to a valley in which the recusants were holding an assembly. As they came in sight, each party dismounted. The barons fell upon their knees, refusing, with tears, to arise until they were assured that their brother-pilgrims would not desert them. The latter were deeply moved by the sight; they also wept bitterly; and, after a short deliberation apart, they agreed to remain in company till the ensuing feast of St. Michael, provided the barons would swear upon the saints, that afterward, within fifteen days from the time of their demanding them, they should be supplied with vessels for their transport to Syria.

This compact having been ratified and sworn to, they reembarked, and quitted Corfu on the eve of Pentecost. The martial spirit of Villehardouin is kindled afresh upon the renewal of activity. "The day," he says, "was bright and cheerful, and the winds were soft and favourable as they spread their sails before them. And I, Geoffrey, the Marshal of Champagne, who have dictated this recital, having been present at the matters therein related, and conscious that it contains nothing but truth, bear witness that so glorious a sight had never been beheld before. Far as our view could extend, the sea was covered with the sails of ship and galley; our hearts were lifted up with joy, and we thought our armament might undertake the conquest of the whole world." Nor was this the impression of such only as held command. While doubling the promontory of Malea, they fell in with two vessels filled with knights, pilgrims, and sergeants, returning from the Holy Land. They were some of those who had departed from their agreement of meeting at Venice, and were now ashamed to declare themselves. The Count of Flanders sent his barge to inquire their destination and quality; and as it approached the vessels, a sergeant, struck by the gallant bearing of the fleet before him, leaped on board, and cried out to his less enthusiastic comrades, "Give me my baggage, for I shall join these people who appear certain of subduing the land!"

Negropont, Andros, and Abydos received them as peaceably as Durazzo; and the Byzantine court, lost in sloth and luxury, either disbelieved or disregarded the news of their approach. No secrecy had been affected: both the

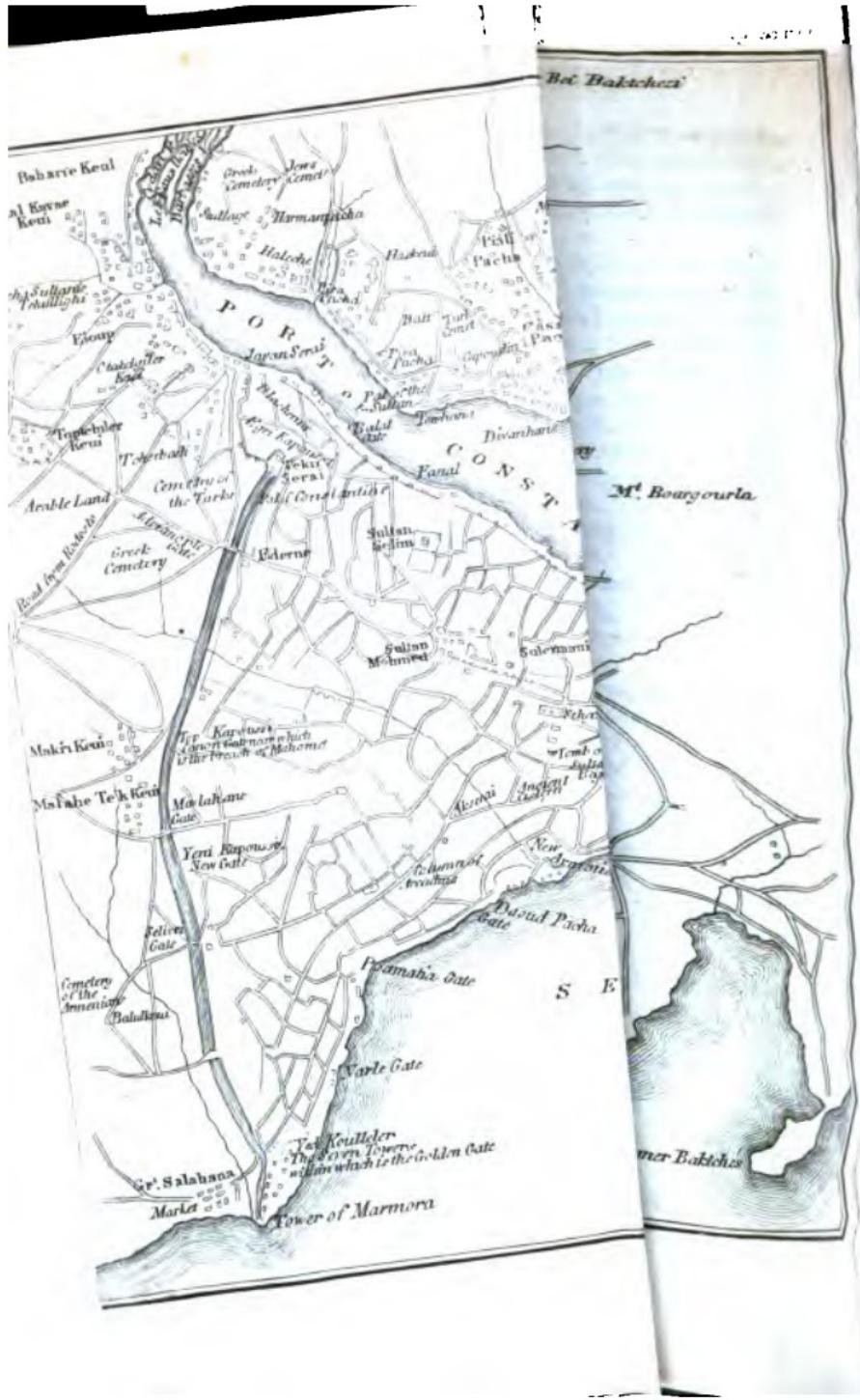
measures taken by the exiled prince, and the consequent design of the crusaders, had been long openly avowed ; and it ought to have been easy for Greece, formed by nature a maritime power and at that time sharing with Venice the dominion of the seas, to have made some great effort before her capital was besieged. It has been said, that but a few years before this invasion the dockyards of Constantinople could furnish one thousand six hundred vessels of war. Admitting the number to be exaggerated, the very exaggeration testifies the greatness of her naval resources. But the emperor, devoted to ease and sensuality, had intrusted his arsenals to a brother-in-law, by whose base cupidity the state was crippled. Stores, arms, equipments—the very hulks themselves—had been broken up and sold to swell the private wealth of Michael Stryphnus ; and when the rumour of impending danger prompted him to restore the navy which he had destroyed, he was forbidden to lift an axe in the forests, reserved, as he was informed by their guardian eunuchs, not for the lowly provision of ship-timber, but for the more exalted pleasures of the imperial chase.

The huge and heavy-laden armament of the crusaders proceeded through the intricate navigation of the Archipelago, and threaded the narrow strait of the Dardanelles, without hinderance or interruption. As the sea of Marmora widened before them, its bosom covered with sails presented a sight of incomparable beauty ; till, three leagues short of Constantinople, they neared the land, and obtained their first view of that great and gorgeous metropolis. Their feelings cannot be doubted ; nor can they be better expressed than in the words of that eyewitness who so deeply shared them. “ When they contemplated the lofty walls and gay towers that enclosed it around, the gay palaces and glittering churches that seemed innumerable, the immense dimensions of the city denoting it was the queen of the earth, they could hardly believe their senses ; nor was there any man, however bold, whose heart did not tremble within him. This was no marvel ; for never since the creation of the world had such an enterprise been attempted by such a handful of men.”

The prudence of Dandolo saved them from destruction in the outset. The barons landed and held a council in the

minster of St. Stephen's, a pleasant village, still known to us by its former name, and now chiefly distinguished by its immense powder magazines. It can be no matter of surprise that some impatience was expressed for an immediate general disembarkation ; but, in opposition to this wish, the doge advanced his own former knowledge and experience of the country. The continent, he said, was of vast extent and thickly peopled, and the soldiers, being in want of provisions, would scatter themselves over it in foraging parties, and be cut off in detail. Far better would it be to make for the islands in sight, and having there refreshed themselves, to proceed at once to the attack of the city. This advice prevailed. They passed the night at anchor, and on the morrow, the feast of St. John the Baptist, having displayed their banners and standards on the turrets, and fenced the sides of their vessels with a *pavissade* of shields close locked together, each man cast a glance upon his arms, well knowing that the time was at hand when he would need their assistance. As they set sail, the wind bore them within a bowshot of Constantinople, and some of the ships were assailed with missiles from the throngs which clustered on its walls and towers. It is probable, although Villehardouin is far from confessing it, that a slight confusion ensued, for he admits that they abandoned their design on the islands as completely as if it had never been proposed ; and, without loss of time, crossed over to the Asiatic shore, and anchored off Chalcedon, where one of the fairest palaces of the emperor received the generals, and the troops were disembarked and encamped. On the following morning the fleet sailed onward to Scutari, immediately opposite to Constantinople, and was followed thither by the army. The Greeks, on the European shore, made a corresponding movement, and encamped on the outskirts of Pera.

The nine days passed at Scutari were not without incidents. A party of foragers, not above eighty lances (less than two hundred and fifty men), came unexpectedly, at about three leagues from the camp, upon the tents of the great Duke Stryphnus, guarded by five hundred Greeks. The Franks were of too chivalrous a spirit to be alarmed by disparity of numbers ; and the Greeks gave way before



seventy-eight towers which, in a circuit of nearly eighteen* miles, studded the long terrace of her walls. The eye might penetrate the gentle curve of the Golden Horn (*Krysceras*), that arm of the Sea of Marmora which, forming the port of the city, bathes the north-western side of the unequal triangle on which it stands. The apex of this triangle, once called the *Acropolis*, now glittering with the palace and gardens of the Seraglio, is found at a point immediately opposite to Scutari and fronting the mouth of the Bosphorus. Following the southern shore of the Golden Horn for about six miles, the fortifications incline to the south-west, at the palace of Blachernæ. Hence, a strong double wall of lofty height, built by Theodosius, and a deep fosse, eight yards in width, protect the sole approach from land, and connect themselves at the *Heptapyrgium* or Seven Towers, with the Golden Gate and that line of ramparts which overlooks the Sea of Marmora. On the north of the Golden Horn stand the extensive suburbs of Pera and Galata. From the fortress known as the Tower of Galatz, to the Seraglio Point, at the modern Alai Kiosk, a breadth of about five hundred yards, a massive double chain, supported at convenient distances by huge wooden piles, and effectually forbidding ingress, was drawn across the harbour. Behind this chain were ranged twenty galleys, all which the avarice of Stryphnus had permitted to remain of the once magnificent navy of his country.

The memorable events which followed have been unusually, perhaps singularly, fortunate in the contemporary illustration which they have obtained. A writer not less competent to procure authentic information than the Marshal of Champagne, and apparently not less faithful in recording it, was found among the Greeks; and by a comparison of the pages of Nicetas with those of Villehardouin we obtain a living portraiture of the feelings and the actions both of the besieged and the besiegers; we become intimately acquainted with all that was inflicted and was suffered; we learn, in detail, every thing which *intra muros*

* The dimensions of Constantinople are given very differently by different travellers; we have adopted those assigned, after personal reconnaissance, by the late Dr. Clarke. Gibbon is unwilling to allow the walls a circumference of more than fourteen miles, including Pera and Galata.

peccatur et extra. Nicetas was a citizen of Chonæ, in Phrygia, the Colosse of St. Paul ; and he had raised himself, successively, to the high honours of senator, judge of the veil, and logothete of the empire. The importance of the last-named office will be best estimated by the representation of the historian himself, who compares it to the chancellorship of the Latin monarchies, and assigns to it the supreme guardianship of the laws and revenue. After sharing in the miseries of the capture of Constantinople, he retired to Nice, and there composed his elaborate history, which embraces somewhat more than his own times ; commencing with the death of Alexius Comnenus in 1117, and proceeding to the year which followed those transactions of which we are now immediately treating. Of the facts which concern our present narration he was, for the most part, an eyewitness ; and of those things which he presents from accredited rumour or on private authority, his station and talents rendered him a fit and able judge. To those who seek only for agreeable reading his style is most repulsive ; and, in order to be understood, it must be divested of much affectation and many florid and inflated metaphors. One of his editors, indeed, has broadly stated that he would rather work in the mines than translate from Nicetas when he indulges in the poetic vein.* But, having once made allowance for this tendency, it is not difficult to separate the exaggerations of his rhetoric from the sobriety of truth. That he regarded the invaders in general, and the Venetians in particular, with the most bitter detestation, renders him not the less desirable witness for our purpose ; for he thus becomes a more effectual counterpoise to the Latin authorities. And it is not a little to the credit of his impartiality, that he speaks of the usurper Alexius, even after his fall, with generous and unexpected, perhaps with undeserved, approval. "His gentleness and mercy," says the panegyrist, "were of no common order ; he never tore out eyes nor mutilated limbs ; he had no pleasure in butchery ; and during his reign no matron, through his agency, was clad in mourning." What volumes are compressed in these few laudatory words, in testimony of the general horrors of the Byzantine government !

* Wolfius, speaking of his *Praesertim*.

It was of some importance that the disposition of the populace of Constantinople should be ascertained ; with what degree of attachment they regarded their existing ruler, with what recollections they turned to their deposed princes. For this purpose, on the morning after their haughty dismissal of the Greek envoy, the Doge of Venice and the Marquis of Montferrat embarked on board a galley, bearing with them the young Alexius. Accompanied by a train of knights in other vessels, they rowed under the walls, more in an amicable than a warlike guise, from the point of the Golden Horn to the Seven Towers. Along this line they exhibited the prince, proclaimed his wrongs, appealed to the compassion and the fidelity of his subjects, and sought to awaken both their fears and their affections. But the attempt was fruitless, and the throngs on the walls were either silent or made hostile demonstrations. It may be doubted whether they entertained any real preference for either of the contending parties ; enslaved by a debasing tyranny, they were careless beneath what despot they should crouch, and the feeling which most strongly influenced them was dread of that hand which could be more immediately raised to punish.

On the tenth morning (July 6) after their arrival, it was resolved to attempt the passage of the Bosphorus ; and the part selected was not far below the spot ennobled by the bridge of Darius. Before they addressed themselves to this dangerous enterprise, for such, previously to the event, it might justly be considered, mass was celebrated in the presence of the whole army. The bishops and clergy exhorted their people, instructing them that in this extremity, in which none could foresee what might be God's pleasure concerning him, it was the duty of every one to confess his sins and dispose of his worldly possessions. This counsel was received with fervent zeal and devotion. At length, the appointed moment having arrived, the vanguard embarked under the command of Count Baldwin, who was followed by more good lances, archers, and crossbowmen than any other lord of the army. Four other divisions succeeded, respectively led by Henry, brother of the Count of Flanders, the Counts of St. Paul and Blois, and Matthew of Montmorency. In the last were enrolled Villehardouin himself and the flower of the Gallic chivalry. The largest band, Lome

bards, Tuscans, Germans, and Piedmontese, composed the rear, which was intrusted to the Marquis of Montferrat. The mass of soldiery crowded the heavy vessels under the guidance and protection of the galleys, and the knights, armed from head to foot, with their horses ready harnessed and saddled, entered the palanders. As the day advanced, the sun shone brightly, and displayed Alexius with his countless hosts awaiting the onset on the opposite shore. The trumpets sounded, and the galleys moved forward, each towing a heavier transport; none asked who was to be foremost, but every man pushed on with all his might to land. As they neared the western bank, the knights started up from the palanders, and, armed as they were, helm-laced, and lance in hand, leaped baldric-deep into the sea. Nor were the archers, sergeants, and arquebusiers less eager than their lords, each company forming on the spot where their vessels touched the ground; and the Greeks, after a faint show of resistance, fled before the lances crossed each other. As soon as the shore was cleared, the ports were opened, the bridges let down from the palanders, and the horses having disembarked, the knights mounted, and the six divisions formed according to preconcerted order. The van, under Count Baldwin, advanced to the camp from which Alexius had beheld their landing; it was already abandoned, and afforded a rich booty to the conquerors. For the night, they took post near the tower of Galata, in a quarter named Stenon, which was at that time, as it is now under its modern denomination *Hassa Kai*, allotted to the Jews. At dawn of the following day, they repulsed a sortie from the tower, and gaining possession of its gate before the fugitives were able to close it, they stormed the castle with great slaughter, and established themselves within its walls. The possession of this fortress materially assisted the operations against the harbour, the mouth of which it commanded. A favourable breeze sprang up, and the Venetian galleys, setting all sail, bore down upon the huge chain, without molestation from the shore. For a while it resisted the shock, and the mariners endeavoured, but in vain, to sever its massive links with gigantic shears constructed for the purpose. At length, one vessel, more fortunate than its mates, and realizing the good omen of its name, *The Eagle (l'Aquila)*, succeeded in breaking through the boom. The whole navy

triumphantly followed, and the total destruction of the little squadron opposed to it ensued. Some of the vessels were instantly captured, some ran under the city walls and were sunk, after having been abandoned by their crews, many of whom clung to the fragments of the broken chain, still suspended from its palisades, and gained the land by swarming along them as on a rope.

The assault of the city now became an object of discussion. Should the sea-line be attempted from the port? or should the efforts of the besiegers be directed against the long western wall which fronted the land? The Venetians, accustomed to maritime operations, and confident of victory on their own element, promised to mount the ramparts by planting ladders from their ships. The French knights, on the other hand, preferred the solid earth and the open plain. Fearless while mounted on their steeds and couching their lances, they shrank from a mode of warfare with which they were imperfectly acquainted. In the end, it was determined to make a combined attack both by sea and land; each nation choosing that method of approach with which it was most familiar.

After four days' rest the fleet moved up the harbour, and the land forces advanced at the same time along the shore, in order to round the head of the gulf and take post under the walls. A march of about seven miles brought them to the extremity of the Golden Horn, where the little rivers Barbyses and Cydaris, uniting their beds, discharge themselves by a single channel into a small bay; which, from the purity of its waters and its abundant produce of fish, is known to modern ears as *Les Eaux Douces*; a far more picturesque title than that given it by the Turks, *Kiat-hane*, or by the present Greeks, *Kartaricos*, both of which names refer only to the paper-mills now deforming the beauty of the scene. The passage of these streams might have been easily defended; but the Greeks had been contented to break down the stone bridge which traversed them, and to retire within their walls. A day and a night completed its reparation; and though the besieged at the lowest estimate outnumbered the besiegers in the proportion of twenty to one,* they looked on without venturing to oppose. The six

* We dare not venture upon numbers. Even in modern campaigns, with all the lights of gazettes and commissariat returns, they are for the

divisions passed the river in succession, and sat down before the city. Too few for a regular investment, it was but a single gate (probably that which is now known as *Egri Kapoussi*) against which they were enabled to direct their efforts. The position chosen for their camp was at the north-western angle, between the palace of Blachernæ and the castle of Boemond, and here they were laboriously employed in bringing up their artillery, constructing their works, and planting their scorpions, catapults, mangonels, and perries. Few moments could be snatched for repose, for they were harassed by perpetual sallies, and they could not eat, nor rest, nor sleep, except in arms. The attacks were renewed six or seven times each day ; and many of them, headed by Theodore Lascaris, a son-in-law of the emperor, who was destined to great subsequent distinction, occasioned severe loss. Often, however, did they chase back the Greeks under their very walls, till they were themselves forced to retreat from the volleys of stones hurled upon them by the garrison. The more effectually to secure their camp, they fortified it with stout barriers and palisades. But an enemy, carrying greater terror than the swords of the Greeks, threatened to commence its inroads, and their situation increased in peril every hour. They dared not forage beyond four bowshots from their tents, and even then only in large parties. Their fresh provisions having been exhausted, they had recourse to their horses, and when these had been killed, and this resource failed also, a little meal and a little salted meat now constituted their whole store. Their supplies even of this kind, at the commencement of this most extraordinary siege, had not been calculated for more than three weeks' consumption.

Ten days out of that period had passed away ; and their greatest hazard was exposure to further delay. Their preparations were completed on the land side, and the Venetians were equally ready in the harbour ; so that, on the morning of the 17th of July, four of the six divisions advanced from the camp, headed by the Count of Flanders and his brother, the Counts of Blois and of St. Paul, while the reserve of Champagners and Burgundians, under the Mar-

most part vague and unsatisfactory. Villehardouin certainly implies that there were at least 600,000 men in Constantinople capable of bearing arms. The Franks after their desertions and losses could scarcely exceed 20,000.

quis of Montferrat and Matthew de Montmorency, kept guard over the camp. Much injury had already been suffered by the outer wall, against which the united force of not less than two hundred and fifty engines had been directed ; and the ponderous stones which they were constructed to hurl had in many instances reached and destroyed parts of the splendid architecture within the city itself. Two ladders were successfully raised against a barbican, defended chiefly by a band of Pisans, whom hatred of Venice had attached to the emperor, and by a ruder and yet more formidable battalion, celebrated in Byzantine history as *Varangi*, and called by Villehardouin Danes and English. They were, probably, the descendants of Saxons or of Anglo-Danes, who had fled from England nearly a century and a half before, to escape the tyranny consequent upon the Norman conquest, and who, having tendered their services to the first Alexius, and given ample proofs of their strength and valour, were formed into an imperial body-guard as early as the year 1081. Their weapon was a ponderous battle-axe, a more than equal match for even the double-handed sword of the crusaders ; yet in spite of these barbarians, for such they were not unjustly considered, a gallant handful of fifteen warriors, all, except two of them, knights, gained the summit of the wall ; but before they could be supported, the defenders rallied and drove them back. Two, says Villehardouin, remained prisoners, and were carried before the emperor Alexius, to his singular gratification. He had not participated in the combat, but looked on from the summit of a lofty tower. Many other of the assailants were grievously hurt or wounded ; and the attack having entirely failed, the French retired to their camp, broken and dispirited.

The Venetians had been far more successful. In their preparations they had displayed extraordinary skill, and exhausted every branch of military art then known. Their decks were crowded with warlike engines, and protected from the effects of fire by a thick covering of ox-hides ; and in order to gain the ramparts, they had framed rope-ladders, which could be let down at will from the extremities of the yard-arms, and which from their great height overtopped the city walls. These drawbridges, as they neared the shore, were lowered, and poured forth swarms of com-

batants upon the heads of the astonished garrison. But their triumph must be told in the dramatic words of Villehardouin. "Their vessels, marshalled in a line which extended more than three bowshots, began to approach the towers and the wall which stretched along the shore. The mangonels were planted upon the decks, and the flights of arrows and quarrels were numberless; yet those within the city valiantly defended their posts. The ladders on the ships approached the walls so closely, that in many places it became a combat of sword and lance, and the shouts were so great that they were enough to shake sea and earth; but the galleys, notwithstanding, could find no opportunity of reaching the land. Now you shall hear of the dauntless valour of the Duke of Venice; who, old and blind as he was, stood upon the prow of his galley, with the standard of St. Mark spread before him, urging his people to push on to the shore on peril of his high displeasure. By wondrous exertions they ran the galley ashore, and leaping out, bore the banner of St. Mark before him on the land. When the Venetians saw the banner of St. Mark on the land, and that their duke's galley had been the first to touch the ground, they pushed on in shame and emulation; and the men of the palanders sprang to land in rivalry with each other, and commenced a furious assault. And I, Geoffry de Villehardouin, Marshal of Champagne, the author of this work, affirm, that it was asserted by more than forty persons, that they beheld the banner of St. Mark planted upon one of the towers, and none could tell by what hand it was planted there; at which miraculous sight the besieged fled and deserted the walls, while the invaders rushed in headlong, striving who should be foremost; seized upon twenty-five of the towers, and garrisoned them with their soldiers. And the duke despatched a boat with the news of his success to the barons of the army, letting them know that he was in possession of twenty-five towers, and in no danger of being dislodged."

The invisible standard-bearer, who struck terror into the besieged and animated his comrades, was probably some gallant soldier, killed (like one of our own brave countrymen under similar circumstances on the ramparts of Serinapatan) in the very moment of his triumph. The Venetians, when once established, with characteristic prudence

secured their booty, and began to send the horses and palfreys which they had captured in boats to the camp ; and while they were thus employed a fresh body of Greeks returned to the charge. In order to maintain their ground, the Venetians set fire to the houses between themselves and the approaching enemy, against whom this terrible expedient proved an insurmountable barrier.*

To change their attack, and to press upon that portion of the besiegers which had been already repulsed, was the obvious policy of the Greeks ; and Alexius, in spite of his unwarlike temperament, placed himself at the head of his myriads, and directed a sally from three gates at once, in the hope of overwhelming the camp. Each of the sixty battalions which the Greeks brought into the field outnumbered any of the six opposed to it ; and the whole plain seemed alive with armed men, who advanced slowly and in good order. Had the crusaders moved forward, they must have been surrounded and swept away ; but forming before their palisades, which effectually guarded their rear, they placed their line so that its flanks also were protected. The crossbowmen and archers ranged in front, the horses formed the second line, and behind these were drawn up the infantry. Two hundred knights, whose horses had been slaughtered either for food or in battle, served that day on foot ; and thus arrayed they awaited their enemies, already within bowshot. At that fearful crisis intelligence of the peril of his friends was conveyed to Dandolo, and the noble-minded veteran lost not a moment in abandoning the towers which he had so hardly won, and in hastening to share the fate of his brethren in arms. Declaring that he would live or die with the pilgrims, and himself descending the first from the walls, he rushed to the camp, bearing with him every hand that could be spared from his fleet. Little, however, would this slender reinforcement have availed, if the courage of Alexius had equalled his overwhelming force. Whatever might have been his own loss (for there is no doubt that the Franks would have sold their lives most dearly), the total destruction of his enemies must have been the result of

* Sismondi states that the Greeks and Franks mutually accused each other of being authors of this fire. Both Nicetas and Villehardouin positively attribute it to the Venetians, in whom it is plain the last-named author considers it to have been a piece of excellent generalship.

repeated charges ; and these were urged upon him by the ardour of Lascaris. Yet for a long time the opposed lines gazed on each other without a movement ; the Greeks too timorous to advance, the pilgrims too prudent to quit their barricades. At length the emperor, despairing of success, or apprehensive of disaster, gave the signal for retreat ; and his steps were followed slowly and cautiously by the Latin knights, astonished at this unexpected good fortune. " And indeed," says the honest Villehardouin, " God never delivered people from more imminent peril than that which this day threatened the pilgrims, the boldest of whom rejoiced when it was passed." Worn with toil and fatigue, they put off their armour ; but their quarters were dreary and comfortless, they were straitened for provisions, and the danger which they had just escaped must again be confronted on the morrow. The Venetians, indeed, might console themselves with their glory. They had displayed the most eminent of all military virtues,—courage, promptitude, fidelity ; and, with a result which does not always accompany merit, they had not only deserved success, but they had also attained it.

" But behold," exclaims the pious chronicler, " the miracles of our Lord ! who displays them according to his pleasure." Strange rumours from the city broke the night-watches of the camp, and intelligence the most joyous and the most unlooked-for was confirmed at dawn. Stragglers arrived, from time to time, all agreeing in the same story, that the usurper, terrified by the firmness of the besiegers, and, perhaps, also by the murmurs of his own citizens, had collected during the night such portable treasure as he could secure, a vast sum in gold, and the rich jewels of the crown ; and, with his daughter Irene and a few followers whom he could trust, had hastily embarked and fled to *Debelos* (*Zagora*), an obscure village in Bulgaria. The fear of general anarchy, so likely to be consequent upon this desertion of the throne, strongly impressed Constantine, the chief eunuch of the palace, to whom this shameful abandonment was earliest known. It was necessary to find some head of the state ; and none appeared so fit, either to calm intestine discord or to conciliate the enemy under the walls, as the rightful but deposed prince. Isaac Angelus was awokened, at midnight, in his dungeon ; and, in the

messengers of his restoration to sovereignty, the sightless old man most probably anticipated, though falsely, the ministers of a bloody execution. After eight years' captivity, he was again invested with the imperial robes ; led by the hand* (how touchingly does the single word used by Nicetas imply his helplessness !) to the palace of Blachernæ, seated on his former throne, and deafened afresh with protestations of allegiance. The barons and the young Alexius were overjoyed at this wondrous intelligence ; so wondrous as at first to exceed belief. The Greeks, proverbially, were little to be trusted, and caution was requisite in accepting their first report. The chiefs, therefore, awaited its confirmation in the camp and under arms, till at length, when an exchange of couriers had removed all doubt, they gave way to their intense feelings of delight. Thanks were devoutly rendered by all to Heaven ; and never, says the brave and sincere Marshal of Champagne, was greater joy manifested since the creation.

Their first step was to depute an embassy to the restored emperor, requiring his confirmation of the treaties entered into by his son, whom, till this agreement was ratified, they detained as a hostage. Matthew de Montmorency, Villehardouin, and two Venetian knights were commissioned for this service. The ambassadors, being conducted to the walls, alighted from their horses, and found the Danes and the English, with their axes, ranged from the gate to the palace of Blachernæ. There they beheld the emperor Isaac, attired in such splendour as to dazzle their imagination ; the empress, a most fair lady, the daughter of the King of Hungary, sat beside him ; and there were such crowds of high lords and noble dames, clothed in magnificent vesture, that there was scarcely room to pass ; for all those who yesterday were the emperor's enemies, were now become the most submissive of his friends.

They were received with courtesy, and admitted to a private audience. In this conference Villehardouin, who was spokesman, urged the ratification of the treaty, at the especial suit of the young prince who had entered into it. "What are the terms ?" inquired the emperor ; and he heard, for the first time, of spiritual submission to the Roman see,

* Χαίρεται πάντες.

and the payment of 200,000 marks. "This covenant," he replied, "is of no trifling importance, nor do I see how we shall be able to fulfil it. But you have so well deserved both of him and me, that if we were to give you the whole empire, it would not exceed your merits." This said, he formally assented to the treaty, and appended to it the golden seal of the empire. On the notification of this event in the camp, the barons conducted the young Alexius, with much pomp, into Constantinople, where the light populace received their banished prince and their foeman of yesterday with loud testimonies of joy. The emperor possessed too accurate acquaintance with the fickle disposition of his countrymen to confide in these outward signs of amity; and as a wise precaution, he earnestly implored the barons, and even his son, to shift their present quarters and to reoccupy Stenon; thus interposing the bay between their troops and the citizens; and by lessening their opportunities of communication, at the same time diminishing the chances of quarrel.

The coronation of the joint emperors (for Alexius became associated with his father) was celebrated on the 1st of August; and as soon as this day of pageantry (the ceremonials of which are minutely described by Ramusio*) had closed, they sought means of discharging their heavy debt to the Latins. The imperial treasury, well nigh exhausted by the profuse luxuries of the late usurper in the first instance, and afterward by his plunder, in the moment of flight, could afford but a scanty pittance towards the fearful amount of 200,000 marks. But the property of such as were known to have supported the fallen Alexius was confiscated; his empress Euphrosyne, whom he had abandoned, was stripped of her jewels; the plate and consecrated vessels of the churches were melted down, and the holy images despoiled of their ornaments. A first instalment was thus raised amid the curses of the people from whom it was torn; and the barons, on receiving it, faithfully restored to each of their followers the sum advanced by him at Venice for his passage. Other causes, besides their impoverishment, contributed to inflame the animosity of the Greeks against the strangers, and to weaken what-

* Lib. ii. p. 88, &c.

ever attachment they might feel for the restored emperors. The princes lived in disunion. Troops of knavish astrologers found encouragement from the imbecility of Isaac Angelus, and his palace was thronged with fawning and parasitical monks, “a long-bearded and God-hated train,” for whom Nicetas, who so styles them, expresses yet greater abhorrence than for the pretenders to divination. By these joint impostors the doting fancy of the impotent old man was amused with predictions of renovated bodily vigour and extended political dominion. He believed that he was to become repossessed of sight, to cast off his other infirmities, as the snake disencumbers himself from his slough, and to arise in rejuvenescence, more like a god than a man. The sceptres of both empires were to be grasped by his single hand, and in his person was to be displayed the magnificence of universal sovereignty. From some absurd belief in the potency of talismans, he removed from the hippodrome to his palace an image of the Caledonian boar, the presence of which near his person he fancied to be a sure preventive of sedition. The populace, more pardonable for their superstition, about the same time, destroyed a colossal statue of Minerva, whose arm, extending towards the west, was supposed to have beckoned the invaders. Infatuated by his idle hopes, Isaac Angelus could ill brook the partner with whom, in the first moments of liberty, he had consented to share his throne; and in the ambition or the thoughtlessness of his son he hourly discovered countless objects of jealousy. The Greeks also found in him no less obvious defects. Of his person Nicetas speaks with bitter contempt; likening his face, perhaps red and swollen with intemperance, to that of some fire-breathing spirit, or “the incendiary angel.” The manners of the Latins were alien from those of Constantinople; and the young prince, owing to his long intercourse with foreigners, adopted customs and permitted freedoms which his severer countrymen regarded, perhaps not unjustly, as degrading the majesty of the purple. They mourned to see the representative of the Cesars surrounded by loose associates, whom he raised to his own level, or rather to whose baseness he descended, by partaking their games of chance and boisterous revelry. And when, in an unseemly frolic, one of his boon companions snatched the golden diadem from the imperial head, and

exchanged it for the coarse woollen cap by which his own was covered, they may be forgiven if they considered the latter as most fit to circle the brows of their unprincely sovereign.

So evident were their feelings of discontent, that Alexius contemplated with dismay the approaching departure of those to whom he not only owed the possession of his crown, but upon whose continued presence he chiefly relied for maintaining it; and in order to secure this object, he commenced a fresh negotiation. Not concealing that he was so bitterly hated that if they quitted him he should perhaps lose both his empire and his life, he proposed that their stay should be prolonged till the following March. For this extension of service he promised to pay the whole subsidy now due to the Venetians, and to continue the association for another year by a new grant. All supplies needed for the army should be furnished by him while they remained; his revenues during that period would enable him to discharge his whole debt; his navy would be equipped and his army recruited, to accompany them to the Holy Land; and, instead of a winter's voyage, they would have the entire summer before them for their campaign.

To accede to this proposal was to postpone yet longer the original and avowed object of the Christian armament, whose proceedings had been hitherto no more than episodes to the great action for which it had been associated. The holy see would assuredly condemn the delay, and yet, since their late success, even the Venetians had sought and gained its spiritual favour. Without humiliation, with scarcely an acknowledgment of disobedience, and certainly without any atonement for it, they had asked absolution, and had received it.* The reply of the legate whom they addressed sufficiently shows the straits to which his court was reduced by the unbending indifference of this haughty republic: "I absolve you," he wrote, "though you have in nowise tendered satisfaction for your sin; for it is better that I should retain you lame and halt, than lose you as altogether dead; and your leprosy, if permitted to continue, may grow contagious, and infect others." In spite of this ungracious pardon, Dandolo, whose sagacity foresaw, in a

* *Gesta Innocentii III 91, apud Muratori, iii.*

prolonged connexion with Constantinople, much chance of increasing the commercial prosperity of his country, and of consolidating establishments now in their infancy, but little hesitated once again to incur the papal displeasure ; and chiefly through the Venetian influence in the council, the terms of Alexius were accepted. The doge received his price by payment of the freight of his vessels ; and the spirit of traffic spreading through the camp, the Marquis of Montferrat engaged to accompany the young emperor, with a great band of men-at-arms, in order to subdue the Thracian provinces which still opposed his succession : 1600 pounds of gold purchased this assistance, and it was not dearly bought ; for, wherever the confederates appeared, the Greeks thronged to proffer their allegiance.

During the absence of this expedition, the jealousy between the Greeks and Latins was bitterly exasperated by the occurrence of a horrible calamity. Villehardouin, either ignorant of its real cause or willing to conceal the violence of his comrades, states that an affray arose between the Franks and the citizens, and that, during their quarrel, a fire was occasioned by unknown persons. Nicetas is more particular, and he speaks of a troop of Flemings, Pisans, and Venetians, which assaulted and plundered a place of worship, named *Mitatus*, belonging to the Saracens. The owners defended it, and were assisted by the Greeks ; and in revenge the rioters fired some adjoining houses. Be the truth as it may, and there is no improbability in the account given by Nicetas, neither by him nor by Villehardouin is any authority afforded for the misplaced sneer with which Gibbon has related the transaction. The fires in Constantinople, from its foundation to the present hour, have far exceeded in devastation and extent those occurring in any other great city ; but all, says Nicetas, that ever happened were as nothing in comparison with this. No power of man could extinguish or even check it. The barons, encamped on the opposite side of the port, watched the progress of the wide-spreading blaze with alarm and trouble ; palaces and churches sank in ashes to the ground, and whole streets, piled with the costliest merchandise, fell a prey to the insatiate greediness of the flames. From the harbour they stretched, through the most crowded districts of the city, across the entire peninsula to the very opposite

sea. The stately domes of Sta. Sophia were endangered, and during eight days the raging of the fierce element baffled all human efforts, presenting a front of fire which extended more than three miles in length. The loss of property and of lives forbade all estimate ; and in order to escape both from the conflagration and the fury of the sufferers, who, whether justly or otherwise, fixed upon the Latins as the authors of their misfortune, fifteen thousand settlers, the descendants of families who had domiciled in Constantinople and had enjoyed great privileges ever since the reign of Manuel, abandoned their dwellings, crossed the Golden Horn, and threw themselves on the protection of the pilgrims. Among these were numerous Pisans, who, in this necessity, forgot their national jealousy against Venice. From that hour, mutual suspicion was aroused between the Greeks and Latins ; confidence was at an end, and the equalizing commercial arrangements which had placed both nations on a par were wholly destroyed.

Alexius returned from his successful campaign in November, apparently more to the joy of his allies than of his subjects. Nevertheless, towards the former his relations had undergone material change. The murmurs of the Greeks were loud, for severe exactions to glut the rapacity of ambiguous friends had reduced them to poverty ; their city had been fired by barbarians ; and, above all, their feelings had been wounded in the tenderest point, by a violation of their religion. The walls of Sta. Sophia had been profaned by a declaration of the supremacy of a foreign priest, and their native patriarch had been compelled to announce from the depth of his own sanctuary that the head of that abomination, the Western heresy, was the legitimate successor of St. Peter. On the other hand, the barons complained, no less impatiently, of the tardy fulfilment of the brilliant promises which had induced their stay , and they were ill inclined to make allowances for the distress, created in great part by themselves, which rendered their payments irregular and deficient. Upon the motives which guided the conduct of Alexius it is impossible to decide, but they were probably of a mixed nature. Even if his wishes inclined towards his benefactors, the very inability which he felt to discharge his debt of gratitude might awaken shame ; and he might, under this conscious-

ness, be unwilling for the present to renew his hitherto familiar intercourse. Or, again, a belief that his power had struck deep root, and that he no longer needed the support on which he had heretofore leaned, might prompt him to throw aside that assistance which now, in his confirmed strength, he regarded but as an encumbrance. To strengthen these suggestions, the insidious counsels of a favourite and a kinsman were not wanting; and he who most loudly denounced the Franks was one who well knew how to reap profit from the quarrel, if he could but excite it. This false friend was Alexius Angelus Ducas, better known in history by the sobriquet Mourtzouphlus,* denoting the black and shaggy eyebrows which met each other on his forehead. He is believed to have been second cousin to the emperor, and this connexion with the imperial blood, joined to his high dignity of *protovestiare*, afforded ample opportunities, which he was far too politic to neglect, of poisoning the ears of his sovereigns. Whether from necessity or compulsion, from imbecility or ingratitude, Alexius became cold, distant, and reserved to his former intimates. His visits to the camp were brief and unfrequent; his payments, at first wrung from him with difficulty and inadequate to the demands of his creditors, in the end wholly ceased. To the remonstrances of the Marquis of Montferrat, who still retained near access to his person, he exhibited inattention or impatience. The theme, indeed, could be little grateful; and upbraidings for wrongs which he wanted ability to redress, memorials of unrequited services, and reproaches for pitiful evasions of plighted faith, were subjects as novel as they were unwelcome in the audience-chamber of a despot of Constantinople. The unhappy youth was beset on all hands with difficulties; and they were of intricacy sufficient to entangle, and of weight calculated to overwhelm, even a firmer and more veteran politician.

The crusaders were not of a temper to be thus idly amused. The doge and barons met in council; and the result of their deliberations affords one of the most striking

* It is not easy to unravel the etymology of the name of Mourtzouphlus. We have followed Nicetas, δε τοις συνεστάθαι ταῖς ὄφραις, καὶ ολον τοῖς ὄφραις ἐπικρέμασθαι, πρὸς τῶν συνεψήβων επενδύσασθαι Μόρτζουφλος. The transition from this reason to the name itself is an intricate one; but that which we find in Gunther is yet more so, *gaci Martipho, id est nos cordis, in gente illa vocabatur.* (*Hist. Constant.* p. 8.)

incidents in this history of wonders. They resolved, that the emperor, as he would not fulfil his covenant, was therefore unworthy of belief; that, as a last hope of reclaiming him, they would depute sufficient ambassadors to require the execution of the treaty, and to remind him of the service which they had performed; that if he intended to act justly, it were well; if not, that they should defy him in the name of all. Upon this most perilous and daring enterprise (as indeed upon all others of similar character), this bearding of the emperor in his own palace, Villehardouin was personally employed; and the extraordinary scene which he witnessed would be robbed of its deep interest if paraphrased from his own simple and energetic relation. "Conon de Bethune, Geoffrey de Villehardouin the Marshal of Champagne, and Miles de Brabant were chosen ambassadors; and the Duke of Venice deputed three of his chief counsellors. These nobles, having mounted their horses, their swords girt on, rode together to the palace of Blachernes; though, from the habitual treachery of the Greeks, it was no trifling danger they encountered. Having alighted at the gate and entered the palace, they found the emperor Alexius and his father the emperor Isaac seated together on two thrones. Near them was the empress, the sister of the King of Hungary and mother-in-law of Alexius, a goodly and virtuous lady. Numbers of powerful lords were present, and the court shone with more than the usual lustre. By desire of the other ambassadors, the wise and eloquent Conon de Bethune spoke first: 'Sir,' said he, 'we are deputed to you by the Duke of Venice and by the barons of the host, to remind you of what they have done for you, which, indeed, is sufficiently apparent to all mankind. You and your father have sworn to perform faithfully the covenant which you had made with them; your letters-patent to that purpose are in their possession; but, though you have often been called upon, you have not fulfilled that treaty as you were bound to do; and we again summon you, in the presence of your lords, to perform all that is stipulated between you and them. If you do so, all may be well! if you refuse, know, that from this hour they renounce you both as their lord and friend, and will pursue you to utter extremity. But they would have you to know that treason is not their practice, nor the fashion of their

country, nor do they make war upon you or any one without first sending an open defiance. This is our errand ; you must decide according to your pleasure.' The Greeks were exceedingly surprised and incensed at this defiance, saying, that none before had dared to defy the Emperor of Constantinople in his own palace. Alexius also testified the utmost displeasure at the ambassadors, as did all the Greek lords, who had formerly been their friends. The tumult within was very great, but the ambassadors, turning round, reached the gate and immediately mounted their horses. As soon as they were beyond the gate, they congratulated themselves upon their extraordinary escape ; for it was a mercy that they were not murdered or imprisoned. On their return to the camp, they related how they had sped to the barons."

The commencement of hostilities was immediate, and a war of unintermittent skirmishes ensued, in which the Franks were for the most part successful. Midwinter arrived without any decisive advantage on either side, when a bold attempt of the Greeks nearly entailed the most frightful consequences upon their enemies. The Venetian fleet, at anchor in the port, was alarmed one midnight by the appearance of huge floating masses of fire, which covered the whole breadth of the gulf, and rapidly approached their station. The troops ran to arms, and the ships were speedily manned from shore. Meantime, the cause of alarm was ascertained, and it was seen that seventeen large hulks, filled with combustibles, had been fired by the Greeks, and left to drift upon the hostile armament by a favourable wind. But for the courage and skill of the Venetians, all had been lost ; the fleet would have been destroyed, and the army, unable to disengage itself, either by sea or land, must have perished, slowly and miserably. Leaping into their boats, or, as Ramusio has stated, probably with a little exaggeration, into the blazing vessels themselves, the intrepid mariners grappled the fire-ships with long hooks ; dragged them out of the port, in defiance of the Greeks who manned the walls on the southern shore ; and, towing them into the main current of the Propontis, sent them, still burning, down the straits. The camp continued in arms during the remainder of the night, but no further attempt was made to disturb its repose, and the

only loss sustained from this great peril was that of a single Pisan merchantman.

Meantime, Constantinople was a prey to the most distracting anarchy. The unworthiness of the reigning prince had been sedulously exposed to public scorn and hatred by the intrigues of Mourtzouphlus, whose own valour, a quality which he possessed in eminence, had been conspicuously displayed in some fortunate encounters. His designs were in part successful; little skill was wanting to cast the tottering Angeli from their throne; and the chief difficulty was to substitute himself in their place. That he was the fomenter of a conspiracy by which the citizens were induced to surround Sta. Sophia, and to clamour loudly for the election of a new emperor, seems beyond dispute; yet, strange as it may appear, in the divisions which ensued, and among the numerous persons of all ranks upon whose acceptance the crown was pressed, and by whom it was rejected, even at the peril of their lives, for it was tendered on the sword's point, his name was forgotten. After three days' suspense, one puppet was raised to unsubstantial sovereignty, and Nicolas Canabus, having been saluted emperor, upon compulsion, prefaced a life of imprisonment by a few hours of nominal sway. Alexius, alarmed for his personal safety, commenced a secret negotiation with the Latins, in which he agreed to admit their troops into the palace; and having intrusted this design to Mourtzouphlus, he thus opened to him the path long coveted by his ambition. Mourtzouphlus revealed the secret to the eunuch Constantine and to the Varangian body-guard; and having shaken their fidelity by showing how much it was mistrusted by their master, he burst into the chamber of Alexius at midnight, and awoke him with the alarming intelligence of a design of immediate assassination. His own kinsmen and the Varangi were announced as the insurgents; the discovery of his compact with the Latins was assigned as the cause of their fury. A secret door opened on passages which promised concealment; and the affrighted prince, confiding in the traitor for his deliverance, after traversing the remoter apartments of his palace to an obscure pavilion, was hurried in fetters to a dungeon. A few days closed his checkered and inglorious life; poison was administered more than once, but ineffectually, and his

miseries were terminated by the bowstring. No violence was requisite to bring to an end the shattered being of his blind and wretched parent. "Grief, terror, and infirmity prevented the necessity of another deed of blood; and Isaac Angelus sank to the grave shortly after his second deposition.

The murder of Alexius was soon known in the camp, notwithstanding the efforts of Mourtzouphlus to conceal it by reports of his natural death, by splendid obsequies, and by an affectation of sorrow. Yet, before the news of the demise of this prince had been spread abroad, the barons, but for the precaution of Dandolo, might have fallen victims to a snare spread for them by the usurper. They were invited to the city in the name of Alexius, under the promise of a final adjustment of their debt, and of large additional proofs of imperial bounty; but the doge suspected the artifice; and, by prevailing upon his confederates not too hastily to accede to the offer, he preserved them from a treacherous massacre. On discovery of the events which had occurred, the crusaders burned with resentment; and in the remembrance that the deceased prince had once been their friend and comrade, they forgot his more recent alienation from their society and interests. Their eagerness to avenge his death was stimulated by the unanimous voice of the ecclesiastics, who for the first time approved the war against Constantinople. They pronounced that the murderer was incapacitated from succeeding to any heritage; and that all who were privy to his crime were alike accessories and heretics. War against all such was just and lawful; and if the doge and the barons had a sincere intention of conquering the land and restoring it to the Catholic church, all who died in that good cause, repentant of their sins, should enjoy the full benefit of the pardons which the apostle of Rome had granted. This discourse, we are assured, was very comfortable to the barons and pilgrims.

The winter was, for the most part, employed in preparations on both sides. The Greeks could no longer complain of want of energy in their emperor; and Mourtzouphlus amply proved that he would defend with bravery the throne which he had not scrupled to win by crime. He replenished the exhausted treasury, established strict discipline among the disorganized troops, repaired the shattered fortifications,

and by continued application both of threats and encouragement, sought to inspire the timid citizens with some portion of his own courage. Bearing an iron mace in his hand, he daily visited the chief posts, and while thus recruiting his means for war, he did not neglect the chances of pacific negotiation. The barons would have treated, and their demand for peace was fifty thousand pounds of gold, about two millions sterling. Dandolo was intrusted with the arrangement of the terms, and a conference was held between the adverse chiefs, which sufficiently betokens their mutual distrust. The emperor appeared on horseback on the shore ; the doge remained in his galley ; and Nicetas affirms that the parley was interrupted by a treacherous attempt of the Latin cavalry to surprise Mourtzouphlus. Be this as it may, hostilities were recommenced ; a second attempt to destroy the fleet of the invaders by fire proved as unavailing as the first ; and in a sally which the emperor afterward headed in person, he was repulsed with no less disgrace than loss. Henry, Count Baldwin's brother, was returning, after a brilliant foray, from the shores of the Euxine ; the rich spoil of Phile, a Thracian town which he had stormed, was the recompense of his valour ; and his knights joyously and perhaps carelessly were escorting homeward such portions of their booty as had not been already transmitted to the camp. Apprized of these movements, the emperor advanced by night, and posting in ambuscade a much superior force upon their line of march, he allowed the main body of the Franks to pass unmolested with its plunder, nor attacked them until the rear began to be entangled in a wood. Changing their front, the Latin knights stood firm ; and the Greeks, ill-prepared for such unexpected resistance, were panic-stricken and fled, while twenty chiefs of distinction were killed or made prisoners ; and but for the fleetness of his horse the emperor himself would have been captured. He did not escape without the unknightly abandonment of his shield, his chariot of arms, and his imperial banner ;* and in the loss of another, and a

* *Clypeum abjecit* is the brief expression of Count Baldwin, in his letter to the pope. Villehardouin says that Mourtzouphlus lost *ses chars d'armes, et parti son gonfanon imperial, et une arcone qu'il faisait porter devant lui, ou il se fit moult, il et le autre Gre. En ole arcone tre Noste-Dame formee* (119). By the *chars d'armes*, Ramusio, among others, understands the *carroccio*, which Ducange, however, thinks was



Carruajo, or Sacred Battle-chariot of the Milaneses.—From PELLALIO

[See also p. 146.]

more venerated standard on the same field, the superstitious Greeks beheld an evil omen for the future contest. The victories of the Comneni had been ascribed to the influence of a sacred ensign which, besides the propitious image of the Virgin, bore other relics of immeasurable sanctity. A portion of the lance which pierced the Saviour while on the cross, and a tooth shed by him in his childhood, were among these treasures; and the *Iconia*, like the *Labarum* of Constantine, had invariably marked the path of triumph. This trophy was, in the first instance, presented to the Order of Cistercians, and by purchase or by some of those other less expensive processes through which, as we have before seen, the Venetians were accustomed to supply their reliquaries, it was afterward transferred to Dandolo.* It was deposited in the treasury of St. Mark, whence, on festivals more especially dedicated to the honour of the Virgin, it was borne to the high altar, amid a blaze of lighted tapers and a throng of ministering priests, as a proud monument of national renown.

Lent was near at hand before the preparations of the besiegers were sufficiently advanced to render an assault practicable; and of the assured confidence with which it was then undertaken they have left a record to which history presents no parallel. Had they not succeeded, it would for ever have risen up against their memories as a signal record of overweening presumption; but coupled with their triumphs, it as signally displays the political wisdom and sagacity of Dandolo, to whom there can be little doubt it must be mainly ascribed. In order to prevent dissension after the city should be taken, it was resolved in a parliament of the barons, held before it was attacked, that they would observe the following agreement.—The whole spoil was to be collected and shared according to stipulated proportions. Six French and six Venetian electors should be

unknown to the Byzantine military establishment. He believes it to have been the emperor's baggage. In the text we have literally translated the term used by Villehardouin.

* Baldwin, in his letter to the pope, says, *quam Ordini Cisterciensi nostri dedicare victores*. Gibbon remarks, that if the banner shown at Venice be genuine, "the pious doge must have cheated the monks of Citeaux." Ramusio makes it fall honestly to the share of his countrymen. *Ea cum Dandulo Duci in rerum divisione sorte obtigisset.* (ill. p. 113.)

chosen for the important task of nominating an emperor, for Mountzouphlus was to cease to reign. Upon the prince thus appointed should be conferred a fourth part of the capital and of the provinces, together with the palaces of Bucoleon and Blacherna. The remainder, having been apportioned into two parts, should be equally divided between the French and the Venetians. Lastly, four-and-twenty of the most experienced pilgrims, half French and half Venetians, should allot the fiefs and honours among their respective countrymen, and determine the feudal service to be paid for them to the emperor.* This extraordinary treaty was ratified and sworn to in forms the most solemn which could be devised, and excommunication was denounced as the penalty against any one who should infringe its terms. That its provisions were afterward completed to the letter is even more deserving of wonder than that they were previously stipulated.

The events of the former siege, and the different fortunes which the assailants had respectively encountered, induced a material change in the plan of the new attack. It was no longer thought advisable that the city should be invested by land; but that the joint force of the allies should be concentrated in one great naval effort. The difficulties of approach from the port had been in some degree increased; but the remembrance that the Venetians had once already triumphed on those walls removed all doubt of similar glory from the sanguine anticipation of the French. The ram-

* The treaty is given at length by Dandolo, I. 3. 32. *apud* Muratori, xii. 333. The passage in it relative to the distribution of the spoil is, as far as we understand it, at variance with the actual distribution which, as we shall see by-and-by, took place. The following are the words of the Venetian copy of the tripartite instrument, and their discrepancy from Villehardouin's text has not, as we believe, been noticed heretofore. After stating that the whole booty is to be deposited in common, the treaty proceeds—*de quo tamen haverem nobis et hominibus nostris Venetis tres partes debent solvi, pro illo ut haverem quod Alexius quondam imperator, nobis et vobis solvere tenebatur. Quartam vero partem vobis retinere debetis, donec fuerimus ipsi solutione coequalis. Si autem aliquid residuum fuerit, per medietatem inter nos et vos dividere, usquedum fuerimus appatiati. Si vero minus fuerit, ita quod non possemus sufficere ad memoratum debitum persolvendum, undecunque fuerit prius dictum haverem acquisitum, ex eo debemus dictum ordinem observare.* Hence it would appear, that, instead of there being an equal division, the Venetians in the very outset were to receive three-fourths of the whole.

parts might have been heightened, and the towers crowned with loftier galleries of more numerous stages ; but what were a few feet more or less to spirits resolved on victory ? To detail the attack which followed would be a needless repetition ; for, in all but its event, it bore a close resemblance to that which we have already related. Each division embarked in its own vessels, and the strictest order was preserved in the separate distribution of ships, galleys, and palanders, through a line of more than half a league in extent. On the morning of the 9th of April, they approached that quarter of the city which the fire had most severely ravaged, between the palace of Blachernæ and the monastery of Euergetes. In many places the pilgrims leaped ashore and charged up to the very walls, protected by shields of ampler size and stronger fabric than those they bore in common, to ward the destructive missiles from above. In other spots, the ladders of the ships were brought so near that those who mounted them and the soldiers who defended the walls and towers, fought hand to hand with their lances. About noon, after unavailing attempts in more than a hundred places, those who had landed were driven back with much slaughter to their ships, and the fleet was compelled to draw off.

Defeated but not discouraged, the barons held a council on the same evening, in the church of Ss. Cosmo and Damiano. Some dejection and much variety of opinions might naturally be expected ; and it was proposed to assault afresh, but in a different quarter, on the side of the Propontis, where the fortifications were less strong. To such a plan Dandolo strenuously objected that the well-known current would bear the ships down the strait, so that they could not be brought to the walls. By some, as Villehardouin confesses, no other consummation was more devoutly sighed for. "Truly there were many who in their hearts wished the winds and waves might carry away the fleet, they cared not whither, so that they might quit that country and return to their homes. It was a natural desire, for the dangers were very great." To a chronicler thus frank in his avowals, it is not easy to refuse implicit confidence,

In the end it was decided that another effort should be renewed against the same spot, with this change of tactics,

that, as the force on each tower far exceeded that which any single ship could bring against it, the vessels should be linked in pairs together, in order that their crews might thus, perhaps, obtain a numerical superiority. Two days' repose was granted to the wearied troops; and on the following Monday they again armed and crossed the gulf. Mourtzouphlus, meantime, elated by his successful defence, had pitched his tents near the monastery Pantetoptes; and the imperial pavilion, glowing with its purple tapestries, crowned the summit of a hill, whence the anxious emperor, no idle gazer like his unwarlike predecessor, but fulfilling all the charges of an able general, marshalled his troops, distributed his orders, observed the changes of the fight, and regulated his defence accordingly. The whole forenoon was passed, as before, in bloody and undecisive combat; and if fortune inclined either way, it was, perhaps, in favour of the Greeks. Towards midday, "the Lord raised a northerly wind which drove the ships nearer shore." At that moment, two galleys of happy omen, the *Pilgrim* and the *Paradise* (they were freighted with the holy burden of the Bishops of Troyes and Soissons), bore down together against one tower. Though linked,* they touched it on opposite sides, "as God and the winds directed." The bridges were lowered from the yards, and in an instant, almost before they rested upon the battlements, a knight sprang forward upon each of them. They were followed by countless others, and the tower was gained. In this distinguished act of gallantry, the French and the Venetians were equal sharers. André d'Urboise survived for another field, but Pietro Alberto was less fortunate; he was mortally wounded, on the very ramparts which he had won, by a Frank, who in the heat of battle mistook him for an enemy.

Four other towers were speedily scaled from the shore; three gates were forced, and the knights, mounting their horses, dashed forward through the city to the emperor's pavilion. Mourtzouphlus had prepared for their reception, but his bold designs were feebly seconded; and the terror of the Greeks may be learned from their own historian,

* Villehardouin (127) positively asserts that the ships were linked. Ramusio, on what authority we know not, separates them. Baldwin, in his letter to Innocent, expressly writes, *Duc naves pariter colligatae.*

who speaks of a single warrior, of dimensions more than human, aspiring to no less a height than eighteen yards, and bearing on his brows a casque high as a turreted city, who penetrated to the tent of the emperor. It can be no wonder that the imperial guards fled before a monster so portentous ; and of those who could credit such a tale, it may be in turn believed, on the authority of Count Baldwin, that a hundred were scattered by one. Unable to maintain himself, the emperor retired to Bucoleon, while the Latins poured in at every quarter, and in each were victorious. The gate of Blachernæ was choked with fugitives, and of the wounded and the dead there was neither end nor measure. Night alone checked the slaughter and pursuit, and as it fell the pilgrims gathered in the great square, overjoyed at the unexpected extent of their success, and not yet aware of all its wonders. The city abounded with strongholds in its churches and palaces ; of the temper of its dense population the conquerors were as yet without experience ; resistance might still be designed ; and on these accounts, with wise precaution, they distributed their stations near the walls. It should not be forgotten, and it was doubtless received as an omen, at the time, that on the first night of his conquest of Constantinople, Baldwin of Flanders slept in the pavilion which the emperor had abandoned.

The night was not spent idly by Mourtzouphlus. Having in vain attempted to rally his adherents, he took refuge in the fastnesses of Thrace, after escaping through the Golden Gate. That gate had been closed for two hundred years ; and it bore engraven on it an inscription, long beforehand regarded as prophetic, and afterward believed to have been fulfilled in this flight of the emperor. "When the fair-haired king of the West shall come, I shall open of myself?"*—Another prediction had ensured the city from

* Raynaldus de Diceto apud X Scriptores, 642. *Quando veniet rex flavus Occidentalis, ego per me ipsum aperiar.*

This fair complexion is again to be destructive to Constantinople. Mr. Forster, in the Notes to his *Mahometanism Unveiled*, ii. 491, a work which recalls to our memories the boldness and acuteness of Warburton, without his paradox or his dogmatism, has cited the following passage. *Wallachius, in Vita Mahometis* (p. 158) *refert, Turcas hodiernos in animalibus suis legere, tandem perstiturum regnum Muhammedicum, donec venient figuli blodii, i. e. flavi et albi filii vel filii a Septentrione,*

capture unless through an 'angel ; and we are informed by an authority not remote from these times, that the rumour of the Latin conquest was disbelieved for many days in the surrounding country, until it was ascertained that the walls had been scaled at a spot on which an angel was painted.* Nor had the Erythrean sibyl been wanting in denunciations ; her mysterious oracles, indeed, baffle the skill of the interpreter ; but we collect from them dark threats of a gathering in the Adriatic, of a blind commander, of the profanation of Byzantium, of the firing of her public buildings, and of the dispersion of her spoil.†

On the flight of Mourtzouphlus, both Theodore Lascaris and Theodore Ducas attempted to rouse their fellow-citizens to arms, and competed for the vacant crown. The populace assembled round Sta. Sophia, and hailed Lascaris emperor ; but though they bestowed this barren sceptre, not all his exhortations could excite them to defend it, so that, hopeless of his country, he too followed in the steps of Mourtzouphlus. The license of a victorious soldiery in a captured city is not easily restrained by discipline ; and before morning, whether out of wantonness or as a desperate protection for his own quarters, a German count set fire to some buildings which separated his troops from the enemy. All that night, and till vespers on the morrow, the flames continued burning ; and by this fire, the third similar scourge with which Constantinople had been visited since the arrival of the Franks, more houses were destroyed than were contained in any three of the most populous cities of France.

At dawn the Latins mustered at their several posts, expecting a renewal of their yester toils, and perhaps a still more serious resistance than had been hitherto encountered. To their surprise they were met, not by armed men, but by a suppliant crowd of priests and women, holding out the

flavis et albis capillis secundum aliorum interpretationem.—M. Samuel Scheleetus, Eccles. Muhamm. p. 22.

* Henricus de Knyghton, *apud X Scriptores*, p. 2416.

† Dandolo, x. 334, *apud Muratori*, xii. 330. The prophecy of the sibyl is as follows : *Fiet potentium in aquis Adriaticis congregatio, caco perducere. Hircum ambigent, Byzantium prophanabunt, adiusta denigrabunt, spolia dispergentur. Hircus novus balabit, usque dum 84 pedes et 9 pollices et sensis pramensurati discurrant.*

cross to them as brethren, and deprecating violence by tears. When the Marquis of Montferrat took possession of Blachernæ, that palace was filled with high-born dames ; and his protection was implored, among others, by two empresses of Constantinople. One, a daughter of France, claimed Louis VII. as her father, Philippe Auguste as her brother. The other was a sister of the King of Hungary. Agnes, the former, had been married first to Alexius Comnenus, and afterward to Andronicus ; Margaret, the latter, one of the most celebrated beauties of her time, was then in her second month of widowhood from Isaac Angelus. She was destined once more to become the bride of a sovereign ; and her charms, perhaps heightened by her tears, so far gained upon Boniface, that he shared with her the throne to which, as a reward of valour, he was soon afterward exalted. Of this kingdom, the cry of the vanquished, as he passed through the streets, might already have created an anticipation ; for he was everywhere saluted with the words,—“ Holy marquis, king ! have mercy upon us !”

Alas ! for the scenes which followed ! If the slaughter were not so bloody as has sometimes been inflicted after a storm, yet the massacre of two thousand unresisting sufferers cannot be related without horror ; and there were calamities to be endured by the most defenceless to which death itself would have been far preferable. Nicetas, in his personal narrative, has presented a lively picture of these miseries. After the destruction of his house in the second fire, he was for a short time concealed and protected by the fidelity of a Venetian merchant, who had been his friend and inmate during prosperity, and who, true to him in this change of fortune, assumed a military garb and stood sentinel at his gate. When longer abode within the walls threatened certain destruction, the logothete, in company with some other fugitives, sought escape from the city. They journeyed on foot, during an inclement season, while his wife was far advanced in pregnancy ; they bore in their arms their children, one of whom was still at the breast, and they carried with them such scanty relics of property as they could secrete about their persons. The women who composed part of this wretched band had adopted various disguises, smearing their cheeks with dirt, and clinging eagerly to disfigurement for protection. All were

not alike successful ; and but for the courage of Nicetas, and a pathetic appeal by which he won over even his enemies to her assistance, one young maiden, the daughter of a judge, who had been torn from her aged father's arms, would have been dishonoured by a licentious soldier. Forty miles were to be traversed before they could feel assured even of comparative safety ; and ere this painful march was closed, they received conviction, if such had been needed, that their religion was involved in the common wreck. The Patriarch of Constantinople, happy to escape with life, was bending in the same course with themselves towards Selymbria, stripped of all his possessions, and almost of his very clothing, unattended, and mounted upon an ass.

Meantime, within the city, the throne from which the patriarch had been expelled was impiously profaned. A frantic woman, whose enormities are represented in strong metaphor by Nicetas, and whose lightest stain was an imputation of sorcery, was installed in the patriarchal seat, in sacrilegious mockery of the oriental worship, while the vaults of Sta. Sophia echoed with the ribaldry and loose songs of drunken revellers. The holy elements were scattered on the rich pavement already defiled with the gore of slaughtered animals, which had been driven in to carry away the pillage, and had fallen exhausted under their burdens. The tombs of the emperors in the church of the Holy Apostles were forced open ; and in the coffin of Justinian the riflers were astonished at beholding the body which it contained, when torn from its cerements and their golden coverings, unaffected by decay, after six centuries of interment. Never, under any circumstances, was the rapacity of a victorious army permitted to glut itself more unre-servedly ; and even where gain was not consequent on destruction, the more than Gothic fury of these civilized barbarians gratified itself by exercise of the power to destroy. We read without surprise that the veil of the sanctuary in Sta. Sophia was rent, and the altar of the Virgin shattered in pieces ; for they blazed with gold and jewels. The rich gilt and silvered carvings, the gems and embossed chalices, the plate and other treasures of the churches, could little hope to escape confiscation, on the plea that they were appropriated to pious uses. But the long catalogue of pre-

cious works of art, ruined by stupid, brutal, and unfeeling ignorance, excites no less astonishment than regret and indignation. Books, the whole literature of the time, never to be replaced,—marbles, pictures, statuary, obelisks, and bronzes,—countless treasures, which the magnificence, the pride, the luxury, or the good taste of her princes had lavished during nine centuries upon this their favourite capital,—prizes which Egypt, Greece, and Rome had supplied, and which had justly rendered Constantinople the wonder of nations,—perished indiscriminately beneath the fury of the marauders; and while almost every church throughout Christendom received a large accession to its reliquary from the translated bones of saints and confessors,* scarcely one monument of ancient skill and taste was thought worthy of preservation for a similar purpose. The Venetians afford a solitary exception, in the removal from the hippodrome of the four horses of gilt bronze which (except during the short interval of their transfer to Paris by Buonaparte, in a like exercise of a presumed right of conquest) have ever since crowned the western porch of the basilica of St. Mark.† Antiquaries appear to hesitate concerning the date and even the native country of these horses; for by some they have been assigned to the Roman school, and to the age of Nero; by others to the Greeks of Chio, at a much earlier period. Though far from deserving a place among the choicest specimens of art, their possession, if we may trust their most generally received history, has always

* Of this holy ware the Venetians obtained a large allotment. Ramusio has given a catalogue of its contents. They consisted of a piece of the true cross; an arm of St. Gregory, according to Ramusio,—of St. George, according to Dandolo (perhaps it might not be easy to ascertain the right owner); a part of the head of John Baptist; the bodies of Saints Lucia and Agatha, and of the holy Simeon; a phial containing the blood of our Saviour, which had flowed from a statue pierced by the Jews at Berytus; a fragment of the pillar at which he was scourged; a nail from the cross, and a prickle from the crown of thorns. (Lib. iii. p. 131, &c.) The authenticity of most of these relics was ascertained by their remaining unhurt during a fire which consumed the sanctuary wherein they were deposited, under the reign of Thiepolo. The miracle did not attract sufficient attention at the time of its occurrence; but some years afterward, in 1265, a formal attestation of it was drawn up, and presented to Clement IV. (Doglioni, iii. p. 142.)

† The writings of Cicognara, Schlegel, and Mustoxidi may be consulted by those who wish to enter more fully into an inquiry relative to these horses.

been much coveted. Augustus, it is said, brought them from Alexandria, after his conquest of Antony, and erected them on a triumphal arch in Rome : hence they were successively removed by Nero, Domitian, Trajan, and Constantine, to arches of their own ; and in each of these positions it is believed that they were attached to a chariot. Constantine, in the end, transferred them to his new capital. It may be added to their story, that when reconveyed to Venice by the Austrian government, in 1815, the captain of the vessel selected for this honourable service claimed descent from the great Dandolo ; and it is satisfactory to be told that of all the works of art restored at that time to their rightful owners these horses suffered least injury from travelling, because they had been taken down and packed by the English. The lion of St. Mark was less fortunate, but he has been carefully repaired.*

But, not to dwell upon this distressing and disgraceful portion of our narrative, nor to detail with the sufferers their separate wrongs and calamities, it may suffice to produce the general estimate afforded by the conquerors. "Of the treasures which were in the palace of Bucoleon, I cannot speak," says Villehardouin, "for their value was inestimable. In Blachernæ, one so immense was found, that it rivalled that in Bucoleon. The other pilgrims who were scattered over the city gained incalculable plunder ; for there was no estimating the quantity of silver and gold, precious vessels, jewels, rich stuffs, silks, robes of vair, gris, and ermine, and other valuables, the productions of all the climates in the world ; and it is my belief that the plunder of this city exceeded all that had been witnessed since the creation of the world."† Or, if we turn to Ramusio, we shall be dazzled by the bright profusion which glitters down his pages, in describing the acquisitions of his countrymen. Gold, silver, tapestries, and furs, silks fresh from the loom or prepared for it ; vases for every use which the caprice of luxury could suggest, and of more various names than we can hope to translate with accuracy ; those costly and now unknown myrrhines which Pompey had won in his triumphs over Mithridates and Tigranes ; gems wrought into drinking-vessels, among which the least precious were

* Rose's *Letters from the North of Italy*.

† Sect. 139.

framed of turquoise, jasper, or amethyst ; jewels, with which the affection or the pride of the oriental despots was wont to deck their imperial brides ; crowns of solid gold studded with pearls ; rings and brooches set with the purest and most inestimable stones ; unnumbered jacinths, emeralds, sapphires, chrysolites, and topazes ; and, lastly, those matchless carbuncles which, placed on the high altar at St. Mark's, blazed with intrinsic light and scattered darkness by their own beams,—these are but a sample of the treasures which accrued to Venice ; and the historian, in adverting to them, appears conscious that language must fail him, in the attempt to convey an adequate impression of their immeasurable extent, their inappreciable cost, and their inexhaustible variety.*

It was no part of the design of the barons that this booty should be privately appropriated, and proclamation accordingly was made through the army, that it should be brought in and deposited together, according to the sworn agreement. Three churches were opened to receive it, and they were placed under the ward of the most loyal French and Venetians. Much, however, was secreted by individuals. Those detected in embezzlement were promptly condemned and executed ; and it is plain that the fraudulent retention was not confined to the lower soldiers only, for, among the criminals thus punished, we read of a knight in the train of the Count of St. Paul, who, in order that his disgrace might be enhanced, was hung with his shield suspended from his neck. After all these deductions, which were supposed to exceed the spoil absolutely brought to division, and to which must be added the losses suffered in three fires, we find the enormous sum of 1,125,000 marks of silver distributed in the following proportions : first, a fourth part of the whole was set aside for the future emperor ; then, an equal division of the remainder was made between the French and Venetians, and the latter received payment of their debt of fifty thousand marks from the former. In the shares of each individual, one mounted sergeant was considered equal to two sergeants on foot, and one knight to two mounted sergeants. The Venetians, in their love of speculation, had previously offered to farm the whole ; promising to pay one

hundred marks to each footman, double that sum to each horseman, and four times as much to each knight. To have been gainers by this bargain, they must have been able to produce a sum considerably larger than that which was really brought to account ; and they were far too accurately versed in calculation to have made a blind and unthrifty proposal.*

A month was passed in these adjustments, and the choice of an emperor was still to be determined. On Sunday, the 9th of May, the twelve electors assembled in the gorgeous chapel of the palace of Bucoleon, which had been assigned for the residence of the doge ; and here, having been sworn upon the Saints that they would truly and faithfully choose whomsoever they judged most proper for the station and most capable of governing the empire, they proceeded to their important deliberations. The Venetians affirm that their doge was the first person nominated ; not by his own countrymen, but by the French ; and that it required the eloquence and wisdom of Barbo, one of the best orators and statesmen of his time, to prove to the other electors that such a choice would be, in every way, most impolitic. It is far from improbable that such a discussion really did occur ; for the brilliant exploits of Dandolo must have inspired unbounded admiration, gratitude, and affection ; and,

* We are wholly unable to reconcile the various estimates given of this booty ; and Villehardouin has manifestly contradicted himself, unless he means to distinguish between money and other property ; and even in that case he is hopelessly obscure. He first speaks of the residue belonging to the French, after payment of their debt to the Venetians, as 100,000 marks (§ 124), yet in the following section he advances it to more than 400,000. Assuming the latter sum to be correct, we shall obtain the following result according to the generally received distribution :—

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|--------------------------------|---------|
| French residue | 400,000 |
| Payment to Venetians | 50,000 |
| Venetian share | 450,000 |
| | 900,000 |
| Emperor's fourth | 225,000 |

Total 1,125,000 marks of silver.

Gibbon estimates 400,000 marks = 800,000L sterling = seven times the then annual revenue of England. Following up this calculation, we obtain the whole sum, above 2,250,000L, or more than twenty times that revenue.

If we adopt another reading in Villehardouin, of 500,000 for 400,000, the sum will be increased, in round numbers, to 2,625,000L.

as a more worldly motive, his advanced age promised a speedy succession. It was perhaps only by such intimate knowledge of the incompatibility of the two offices, as none but a senator of Venice was able to advance, that those evils could be fully displayed, which must result from placing the same person at the head of the closely-limited government of the *Lagune* and of the unrestricted despotism of the empire. Villehardouin, however, omits all mention of Dandolo. General opinion, he says, previously to the election, had so exclusively marked out the Count of Flanders and the Marquis of Montferrat as sole competitors, that, at a meeting of their respective adherents, it had been wisely determined beforehand to set apart an ample provision for him who should be disappointed ; and thus to prevent a recurrence of that destructive jealousy which had followed the election of Godfrey to the crown of Jerusalem. It was agreed that the one who was rejected should receive the isle of Candia, and (however vague the allotment) "all the country on the Turkish side of the strait," for which he should be liegeman to the emperor.

It is quite unnecessary to attribute the result of this election to any petty intrigue ; for Baldwin, in whom all the suffrages were united, was a descendant of Charlemagne, and the most powerful prince in the army. He had been a great, if not the chief, original promoter of the crusade ; and his personal virtues commanded general esteem, confidence, and attachment. Nicetas, indeed, in his bitterness against the Venetians, has taxed Dandolo with private views in determining the choice ; but the Greek historian has not been fortunate in this portion of his narrative ; and it may be believed that he was not better acquainted with the secrets of the Latin cabinet, than he has shown himself to be with the geographical position of the territory of Montferrat when he speaks of it as a maritime power. In the hall of the palace, the Doge of Venice and the barons impatiently awaited the decision of the electors ; and it was presented to them, at midnight, by the Bishop of Soissons, in the following terms :—"Lords, by the mercy of God, we have been unanimous in the choice of an emperor. You have all sworn to receive for your emperor the person whom we should appoint, and to aid and maintain him against all gain-sayers. And now, at the very hour in which our Lord

was born, we declare Baldwin, Count of Flanders and Hainault, Emperor of Romania!" Shouts of joy followed this announcement: the Marquis of Montferrat generously pressed forward to be the first who should tender homage to his successful rival; and the new emperor, raised upon his shield, was exhibited to the congratulations of the populace, and borne in triumph to Sta. Sophia.

The coronation was celebrated in that cathedral, with great splendour, on the 23d of May; when the *calyptra* was placed on the head of Baldwin by the papal legate, who performed the functions of the patriarch not yet appointed. Before this solemnity the Marquis of Montferrat had sought and obtained the hand of Margaret of Hungary. On account of the contiguity of the dominions of his brother-in-law to Thessalonica, he exchanged for that kingdom the territory which had been assigned to him, and sold his right over Candia to the Venetians.

Little more of this eventful history remains, unless, as is usual in the winding-up of a romance or a drama, to dispose of the principal characters which have figured during its progress. To distribute exactly the fiefs which each received would, perhaps, be impossible; for, in the act of partition of the Greek empire (such was the limited knowledge possessed by its conquerors of the lands which they had won), many of the names are not to be recognised, and not a few cities, and even provinces, are altogether omitted. It would, however, be ungrateful to the valiant knight and faithful chronicler of Champagne, to whose pages we have been so largely indebted, if we omitted to notice that Geoffrey de Villehardouin obtained, as his reward, Messinople, on the banks of the Hebrus, with the title of Marshal of Romania. For the rest, we shall confine ourselves to the Venetians. To them was assigned a vast territory, in which may be distinguished the well-known names of Ægospotamos, Nicomedia, Adrianople, part of Eubœa, Egina, Megalopolis, Methone, Patras, the Cyclades, Sporades, and many other isles of the Archipelago and Adriatic, and a long line of ports, skirting all the shores of the empire. The illustrious Dandolo, as the close of his splendid toils, and in honourable completion of the original treaty, was permitted to tinge his buskins with the purple hue distinctive of the imperial family, to claim exemption from all

feudal service to the emperor, and to annex to the title of **Doge of Venice**, the proud style of **DESPOT OF ROMANIA, AND LORD OF ONE-FOURTH AND ONE-EIGHTH OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE.**

CHAPTER IV.

FROM A. D. 1204 TO A. D. 1259.

Fate of Mountzouphlus—The Bulgarians invade the Empire—Defeat and Capture of the Emperor Baldwin—Death of Enrico Dandolo—The pseudo-Baldwin—Policy of Venice respecting her Eastern Acquisitions—First written Code of Venetian Law—War with Eccelio Romano.

DOGES.

A. D.

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| | | ENRICO DANDOLO. |
| 1205. | XLIV. | PIETRO ZIANI—abdicates. |
| 1228. | XLV. | GIACOMO THIEPOLO—abdicates. |
| 1249. | XLVI. | MARINO MOROSINI. |
| 1252. | XLVII. | RAINIERO ZENO. |

At the dazzling and triumphant epoch which we have just quitted, and upon which we have lingered with unwillingness to break away, how gladly should we close all notice of that portion of Byzantine history in which the Latins continue to occupy the foreground ! The little which remains incidental to our leading narrative is of another and most painful character, replete with disaster and dishonour.

As soon as the Greeks scattered over the wide provinces of their dismembered empire began to recover from their panic, they regarded, with surprise and shame, the inconsiderable band which had changed their dynasty. In the short period of a year, they discovered that the loss of the capital was not the loss of the whole country ; that twenty thousand men, even if combined, could little hope to subdue the immeasurable tracts which they had already partitioned ; and that mutual jealousy resulting from ill-defined power was beginning to create dissension among those whose very existence depended upon their union. The emperor

and the King of Thessalonica had all but appealed to arms ; and, had it not been for the prudent mediation of Villehardouin and the reverence attached to the age and the wisdom of Dandolo, those swords which had jointly achieved the most chivalrous exploit of history, would have been bared against each other. The chief peril of the Latins did not arise from either of the deposed princes who had worn the imperial crown. Both of these were still fugitives ; but Alexius had collected the more considerable force, and was encamped with his adherents at Messinople. His daughter Eudocia, during the short reign of Mourtzouphlus, had accepted the hand of that usurper, perhaps upon compulsion ; for he was already married, and divorced his former wife in order to form this new alliance, which he fancied might strengthen his title to the throne. Chased by Baldwin from Adrianople, Mourtzouphlus applied to his father-in-law for protection ; promising him allegiance, and tendering the resignation of his own claims upon the imperial title. Alexius, burning with resentment, both for the invasion of his throne and the dishonour of his daughter, received these offers with a feigned approval. He invited Mourtzouphlus to his camp, prepared for him a magnificent entertainment, and promised to ratify the yet doubtful marriage. The unsuspecting victim was indulging in the luxury of the bath, when he was dragged to an inner chamber by command of Alexius, and there, in the presence of Eudocia, and in defiance, it is said, of her tears and remonstrances, his eyes were torn from his head, and he was turned out a sightless wanderer. Before many days, he fell into the hands of the Latins, and was sent prisoner to Constantinople. There, being arraigned for the murder of the young Alexius, he pleaded that he had only put to death the betrayer of his country, to whose punishment the whole imperial family consented. With more abhorrence for the crime than regard to justice, the Latin tribunal, to whose jurisdiction the wretched culprit could scarcely be deemed amenable, condemned him to death ; and to mark the deep sense entertained of his enormity, this punishment was inflicted by a mode almost unexampled in horror.*

* Ducange, however (*Obs. sur Villehardouin, § clixii.*), gives some instances of similar executions in France, during the reign of Louis VII.

In the forum of Taurus, Arcadius had erected a marble column, on which in spiral *bassi rilievi* (like those which decorate the pillars of Trajan and Antonine at Rome) were represented his own victories, or those of his father Theodosius. The base only now exists, for the shaft, having become ruinous, was taken down towards the close of the seventeenth century ; but in its original height it towered to one hundred and forty-seven feet. Dragged up the internal staircase to the summit of this column, the miserable criminal was exposed to the gaze of a countless multitude thronging round its pedestal. His recent privation of sight spared him, indeed, the terrors of the dizzy height, and the fierce glances of pitiless spectators, but their exulting shouts might ring fearfully in his ears, before he was hurled down and dashed to atoms on the pavement below. The superstition of the Greeks dignified this event with abundant prodigies. Fifty years before the invasion of the Latins, Tzetzes had related the dream of a matron who saw an army in the forum, and a man sitting on this column, clapping his hands and uttering a loud exclamation.* One group on the pillar itself is said to have represented the storming of a city from the beach, and an image with a crowned head falling from a lofty height.† Villehardouin adds a third "miracle," which may be no more than a variation of the second ; for the brave knight is not very likely to have regarded too critically the "goodly sculpture" with which he tells us the column was adorned. "It bore," he says, "many statues of marble, and among them that of an emperor. This statue had fallen down ; hence it had been predicted that an emperor of Constantinople should be thrown from the column, and thus the prophecy was accomplished." After the capture of Constantinople by the Turks, in 1453, Gentili Bellini, a Venetian artist, was permitted to make drawings of the sculpture on this column as they then existed ; from these drawings, preserved in the Royal Academy of Painting at Paris, they were engraved by Menestrier, and afterward by Bandurus in his *Imperium Orientale*. But no figure of a falling man is given by either of these artists. Alexius himself, after his vengeance upon his rival had been satiated, though he

* *Chiliad.* ix. 277, as cited by Ducange, *Ode sur Villehardouin*, § cixiii.
† Bamusio, lib. iv. p. 174.

escaped with life, did not long retain his freedom. He was taken by the King of Thessalonica, who sent his imperial robes, the *calyptre*, and the purple buskins, as offerings to the emperor, and transferred his captive to a prison at Montferrat.

The establishment of an independent kingdom in Bulgaria, during the first portion of the feeble reign of Isaac Angelus, has been already noticed. The fierce chief Joannice, or Calo Johannes, who succeeded to that crown, had obtained his recognition by Pope Innocent; and, perhaps, regarded with a jealous eye the overthrow of the empire by any other hand than his own. The Greeks, therefore, found in him secret encouragement and support; but, for a while, he dissembled his ulterior intentions, and even the deep indignation which he must have felt in the haughty reception of his ambassadors by the new emperor; when, far from admitting his claims to sovereignty and fraternity, Baldwin treated him as a revolted vassal, and spoke of submission as the necessary prelude to forgiveness. It was not until the Latin troops had spread themselves over the remoter provinces, in order to obtain knowledge and to seek possession of their nominal conquests, that the Bulgarian prince avowed his open enmity; but when the flower of the army followed Henry, the brother of the emperor, into Asia, Joannice took the field. The Greeks at the same moment rose in arms; and in almost every town from Mount Haemus to the Hellespont, the Latins were overpowered, and either fell beneath the daggers of the insurgents or gained safety only by flight. The Venetians were chased from Adrianople, their single inland establishment; and that important bulwark and key of the capital was garrisoned by unnumbered Greeks, and protected in its approaches by a formidable horde of Barbarians. Joannice had summoned to his banners a Tartar tribe, and the irregular warfare of fourteen thousand Comans was destined to baffle the tactics of European chivalry.

Baldwin had been visited by the heaviest domestic affliction; his countess, Mary of Champagne, whom he tenderly loved, and who was worthy of her lord, had died at Acre; from which city she was preparing to join her husband, in order to partake his new dignities. Aroused from his grief by the unwelcome tidings of the revolt of the Greeks,

the emperor hastened, after performing her funeral obsequies in Sta. Sophia, to suppress the insurrection ; and too impatient to await the arrival of his brother, whom he had recalled from his Asiatic expedition, he pressed forward with not more than sevenscore lances, about seven hundred men, to Adrianople, and there united himself with a somewhat more numerous body. The banners of Joannice floated on the towers of that city, and so inadequate was the small handful of Latins to attempt its siege, that they lay before it for three days, to use the simple and expressive words of Villehardouin, in great perplexity, and in numbers wofully small. The arrival of Dandolo and his Venetians doubled their force ; but they were pressed for forage, they were still too few for an assault, and the King of Bulgaria with his ferocious Comans was known to be on his march to the relief of the city. Imagination busily enhanced the savage manners of these Scythian foes, few of whom had as yet embraced even Mohammedanism ; the great mass were still Pagans, and it was affirmed of all, that they sacrificed their prisoners and drank human blood.

Not many days elapsed before their powers were tried ; their skirmishers pushed on to the very camp ; and, lightly armed and fleetly mounted, by a seeming retreat they drew on and wearied the heavy cavalry opposed to them. Horse and man with the crusaders were alike cased in iron, and their onset, on that account, was irresistible ; but, as the combat became prolonged, the very weight which at first overwhelmed their enemies, in the end exhausted themselves. After an unavailing chase for a full league, they prepared to return, when the Comans unexpectedly wheeled round, and having killed and wounded great numbers by a brisk charge and a heavy volley of javelins, they again scattered themselves and disappeared unharmed.

A strict order was issued through the Latin host that, for the future, no horseman should quit his ranks, whatever might be the provocation. On the following morning, it was the Thursday after Easter, the Comans, shortly after dawn, renewed their attack, and rode up to the pavilions. The pilgrims had just risen from mass, and, at the cry of the sentinels to arms, each division marched out of the camp, and took up its position with perfect regularity. The van was commanded by the Count of Blois, who, unable to

endure the galling attacks and taunting challenges of the Comans, forgot the lesson of the day before, and the command to which it had given birth ; and, calling upon the emperor for support, dashed forward at full speed, chasing the flying swarms for more than two leagues, sword in hand.

The consequences of this rash and headlong daring were most fatal ; for, entangled in a morass, and hemmed in by superior numbers, such as were unable or unwilling to fly fell an easy sacrifice to the Barbarians. The Count of Blois, the unhappy cause of this disaster, was twice severely wounded, and at last thrown upon the ground. By the self-devotion of one of his knights, who placed him on his own horse, he might still have escaped, but he vowed by God's grace never to quit the field nor to abandon the emperor in his necessity. There was short time for remonstrance, and a Coman sword quickly terminated the debate. Besides Count Louis, many other valiant soldiers were among the slain. Baldwin himself, greatly pressed, still rallied his followers, calling to them that he was determined never to fly, and conjuring them not to desert him. Those who were near his person testified that belted knight never fought with greater courage than the emperor ; but his valorous efforts were not adequately seconded by the great body of his retainers. Many of them are openly taxed with cowardice by Villehardouin ; they betook themselves to precipitate flight, and the defeat became general. Amid the carnage around him, the emperor still survived : happy for him would it have been if some hostile weapon had taken his life on the field ; but he was reserved for a far more bitter fate, and was captured alive.

Neither Dandolo nor Villehardouin had been engaged beyond the camp : their courage cheered the terror-stricken fugitives and repulsed their pursuers ; and their skill afterward, in a difficult and dangerous retreat, preserved the remnant of their fellow-soldiers. By night, bearing with them all their people, horse, foot, and wounded, they endeavoured to gain Rodosto, a seaport at the distance of three days' march. During the day, they halted in face of the superior force which pursued, but which was unable to break their rear-guard commanded by the marshal. At Rodosto, they were joined by Henry, who was immediately proclaimed

regent ; and though Joannice had spread his Comans even to the gates of Constantinople, the Latins were now in sufficient numbers to venture upon regaining it. It was almost their single possession ; for of the great empire which they had so recently acquired, nothing remained under their government without the walls of the capital but Rodosto and Selymbria. All Romania owned the authority of Joannice ; and beyond the Bosphorus, the whole of Asia, except the castle of Piga, had submitted to Theodore Lascaris.

A new misfortune awaited the pilgrims on their return ; Dandolo, worn with years and toil, and chilled, as may readily be supposed, by the dark mists now gathering over his late unclouded glory, expired, after a short illness, about the beginning of June, in his ninety-eighth year. His remains were interred with splendid solemnities, in the vestibule of Sta. Sophia, where a marble sarcophagus, adorned with the emblems of St. Mark and the ducal insignia, denoted the spot of his repose. On the capture of Constantinople by the Turks, in 1453, this monument was destroyed ; but some personal memorials of her greatest prince were restored to Venice, at the intercession of Bellini the painter, whom we have before mentioned, at that time in favour with Mohammed II. ; and the spurs, cuirass, helmet, and sword of the hero were presented to his descendants. The character of this distinguished statesman and warrior is to be learned most surely from his actions, and these are of the noblest class. He appears to have possessed a rare union of mental and bodily vigour, of moral and physical courage, of military skill and political sagacity. It cannot surprise us that the wisdom which so distinctly foresaw, so discreetly planned, and so dexterously executed the great measures which exalted his country to a height of unparalleled aggrandizement, should be stigmatized as craft and cunning by those at whose expense she was elevated ; and not the lowest nor least assured testimony of Dandolo's eminent merits is to be derived from the charges of astuteness, arrogance, and ambition, to which Nicetas is compelled to limit his accusations.

In person, Dandolo is described to have been of a ruddy countenance and lofty stature ; his blue eyes, though retaining little vision, were not disfigured ; and his mien was

dignified and commanding. At his death, two sons survived him ; and both were honourably distinguished. Raniero administered the regency of Venice during his father's absence, and was afterward nominated to the high office of *procuratore* of St. Mark : Fantino became second Latin patriarch of Constantinople. The family long remained one of the most illustrious in the republic, and among its members are numbered many succeeding doges. One of these, Andrea Dandolo,* is the earliest chronicler of his native country ; and it is fortunate for him that his reputation is built upon a surer base than the meager, phlegmatic, and unimpassioned narrative which has descended to us from his pen.

With the close of Dandolo's bright career we may change our scene, and revert once again to the *Lagune*, from which we have been so long absent ; but before we part from the Latin empire of Constantinople, the little which is known of the sad fate of its first sovereign requires some brief notice. The release of Baldwin was demanded from Joannice by Pope Innocent ; and the Barbarian contented himself by replying that his illustrious captive had died in prison. More than one version of his catastrophe has been given, and each abounds in horror. Nicetas states, that, after long confinement, the Bulgarian cut off his arms and legs, and exposed him to wild beasts. Acropolita adds that his scull, set in gold, was used by the tyrant as a goblet. A yet more romantic tale attributes the Bulgarian's vengeance to jealousy, excited by his queen ; who, becoming enamoured of the prisoner, offered him herself and freedom as the price of his love. The examples of Bellerophon and Hippolytus were unknown or unregarded by the disdainful Baldwin ; and the disappointed fair, incensed at his cold rejection, falsely denounced him to her husband ; who, in a paroxysm of fury, heightened by intoxication, slew him and cast his body to the dogs. The circumstances attendant upon his death, no doubt, are obscure ; but the fact itself is supported by strong evidence : it was accredited, though far from hastily, by the barons ; and it is not easy to assign any reason why Joannice should assert it, if it had been untrue. Nevertheless at the expiration of twenty years,

* Doge in 1343.

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when the sovereignty of Flanders and Hainault had devolved on Jean, the eldest daughter of the supposed deceased prince, a claimant appeared, asserting his identity with the lost Baldwin. He maintained, that after his capture at Adrianople, he had been mildly treated by his conquerors ; till, having effected his escape from them, he fell into the hands of another tribe of Barbarians, to whom his rank was unknown, and who sold him as a slave into Syria. This accident enabled him to discover himself to some German merchants, who ransomed him at a small price ; and as the throne of Constantinople, by the death of his brother, had then passed into another line, the recovery of his hereditary dominions appeared to him an easier attempt than that of his Eastern rights. The populace, ever credulous of wonders and open-eared to novelty, eagerly devoured this tale, which gained admission among several even of the nobler Flemings. It was rejected altogether by the reigning countess ; who, finding herself endangered by the pretender, claimed and received protection from Louis VIII. of France. The king in person examined the nominal emperor ; and though convinced of his imposture, in consideration of a safe-conduct which he had previously granted, contented himself by ordering him to quit his dominions. Detected in his fraud and abandoned by his former adherents, the pseudo-Baldwin nevertheless renewed his projects ; till, having been betrayed into the hands of the countess, he is said to have confessed, under torture, that he was a Champagner, named Bertrand de Rayns. He was exhibited a while to public scorn in the chief towns of the Netherlands, and then ignominiously hanged at Lille. Little doubt can exist of the justice of his fate ; yet such is the fondness of the human mind for mystery, so pertinaciously, in despite of truth, does it cling to the marvellous, that there have not been wanting writers who prefer to believe the countess Jean guilty of an atrocious parricide, rather than to admit that an adroit knave practised a daring but not very difficult imposture.*

* In the short account which Matthew Paris (*ad ann. 1234, p. 320*) gives of this impostor, although admitting the truth of his claim, he taxes him with the treacherous murder of an Eastern damsel, through whose kind offices he had escaped from captivity, and whom he had promised in return to baptize and marry. The pope enjoined a heavy

But to return to Venice.—The long absence of Enrico Dandolo from his capital gave birth to some new institutions on his demise. A commission of five members, *correttori della promissione ducale*, was appointed to inquire into such abuses as might have crept into the government; and by reviewing the inaugural oath of the doge, to omit or add from time to time, at the pleasure of the great council, such clauses as might be deemed necessary for the preservation of the honour and liberties of the state. But a far more remarkable magistracy was composed of three *inquisitori del doge defunto*. They formed a board, from which, whatever might be the case with his successors, the memory of Dandolo had little cause for fear. Their duty was to examine the administration of the deceased prince, to compare his acts with the provisions of his oath, to receive and inquire into depositions against him, and, if charges were satisfactorily established, to condemn his heirs to make reparation. The student of antiquity will call to mind a similar custom which prevailed among the Egyptians, who, before the admission of their dead to the rites of sepulture, examined their past lives by a solemn trial.*

Pietro Ziani was elected doge. It is not easy to pass at once from the glowing narrative which we have just terminated to events of tamer character; and we may be permitted to hasten with rapid strides over an unimportant period. At an early part of the new reign, the Venetians perceived that the wide extent of their ^{A. D.} _{1207.} distant acquisitions would produce weakness rather than strength; and that their scanty native population was ill calculated to retain in subjection a tithe of their great foreign conquests. With true wisdom, therefore, they determined to abandon them as strictly national dominions; and they granted possession of their nominal territories to such citizens as would complete their subjugation at their own cost, and hold them as fiefs under the republic. Hence arose more than one petty dutchy and principality on the

penance, not for the murder, but for the uncannonical omission of baptism before its perpetration. All the misfortunes which followed are regarded by the good monk as judgments; and as a consummation of disgrace, the emperor was hanged between *duos canes veteres, scilicet murgas*—or rather *mergas*, as Dueange corrects the word—water-dogs.

* *Diodorus Siculus*, i. 92.

coasts of the empire and in the Archipelago ; and we read, among many others, of the Sanudi as Princes of Naxos, during a course of four centuries, and of Navagiero as Grand Duke of Lemnos. The quarter of Constantinople which had fallen to the Venetian share was governed by a *podestà*, and the Ionian Islands and Candia were the only recent acquisitions reserved as dependencies on the state. The latter was a source of perpetual trouble, and continued in revolt during the major part of the reigns of Ziani and his successor. Yet, if we may believe the MS. chronicles of Barbaro and Savina, a project of general emigration to the East was at one time contemplated. Ziani is said, during the troubled reign of the second Courte-
A. D. 1223. nay, to have convoked the great council and all the chief functionaries of state ; and after pointing out the precarious condition of the empire under its existing feeble and divided rulers, to have proposed the abandonment of Venice, and the transfer of her whole population to Constantinople. The brilliant prospects which he displayed as likely to result from this important change dazzled many in the assembly ; and it is added, that notwithstanding an eloquent and impassioned appeal to their affections and their patriotism by the *procuratore* Angelo Faliero, the proposal was negatived, in the division which ensued, but by a single voice, which was not unaptly termed "The voice of Providence." How wide a field of speculation does this now scarcely remembered incident open to our view ! What changes in the history of mankind might not the adoption of Ziani's project have occasioned ! Would the existence of the Latin empire have been protracted by it ? Would the conquests of the Turks have been diverted into another channel ? Would Christianity, instead of Mohammedanism, have been the dominant religion of the East ? Compared with these far mightier questions, the fate of Venice herself is disregarded ; and we almost forget to inquire what would have been the fortunes of her deserted islands.

The reign of Giacomo Thiepolo was distinguished by repeated victories obtained over the fleets of John Vataces, the son-in-law and successor of Theodore Lascaris, who had raised the principality of Nice to the dignity of an empire. Thiepolo was the first doge who

undertook the construction of a systematic civil code; and with the assistance of four coadjutors, within a century from the discovery of the Pandects at Amalfi, he presented his country with a collection of written institutes of law. These *Novelli Statuti Veneziani* relate to the descent of property, the recovery of debt, and the punishment of crimes. It is not a little remarkable, that in a code framed for the greatest existing commercial people in Europe, no further regulation connected with trade is inserted than a few directions respecting freights, averages, and seamen's wages. One law, however, deserves notice, as containing, perhaps, the earliest instance of that technical language of calculation which has since become universal. Hitherto, the prevalent usage in reckoning fractions had been to say one-tenth, one-twentieth, &c., or so many pennies or shillings in the pound. A more judicious form of calculating, so much per cent., was introduced by Thiepolo. It was customary for purchasers in Venice to pay down a certain deposit: this was directed in the new code to be lodged in the custody of the *procuratori* of St. Mark, and its amount was fixed, not at two shillings in the pound, but at ten per cent. (*diese per cento*).* To the same regard for the internal benefit of his people may be traced many improvements in the capital effected during the reign of Thiepolo. The piazza of St. Mark was enlarged, its architecture received embellishments, and a canal by which it was deformed was filled up. About the same time, also, the first bridge was constructed on the site of the much celebrated Rialto.

Not long after the accession of Rainiero Zeno, the cruelties of Eccellino Romano, under whom the north of Italy had groaned for twenty years, with slight hopes of deliverance, roused so general an execration, that the first act of Alexander IV. on his election to the tiara was to renew the excommunication fulminated by his predecessor Innocent, and to preach a crusade against this monster. He was denounced, in terms too fully justified by the long catalogue of his enormities, as a son of perdition, delighting in blood, rejected by the faith, the most inhuman of the children of men, and a violator of every

* M'Pherson's *Annals of Commerce*, i. 393

law of society and of the Gospel.* This tyrant, sprung from an ignoble stock, whose grandfather had entered Italy as a poor soldier in the train of the third Otho, by his rare prudence and consummate bravery, qualities too often abused to purposes of ill, had attracted the notice and favour of Frederic II. The March of Treviso, and the line of coun-

A. D. 1235. try between Verona and Padua, had been early intrusted to his vigilance; and as *podestà* of the latter city he acquired no small accession of influence. Cremona, Parma, Modena, and Reggio allied themselves with his government, and thus formed under his guidance a powerful confederation against the Lombard league, which rendered him most important to the Ghibeline, and materially increased his weight with the emperor. In the fierce contest between Frederic and Gregory IX., every change added to the power of Ecchellino; and throughout the unhappy territory between the Trentine Alps and the Oglio, which submitted to him as vicar of the empire, there was no town in which his despotism was not recorded in

* Ecchellino appears to have richly deserved the utmost severity of language, and it must be admitted that he has received it. The writer of the *Chronicon Estense*, among many like expressions, terms him,—*Diaboli carnis, potator humani sanguinis, sibundus inimicus Ecclesie, Hæreticorum refugium, malitiae sedulus adinventor. (311) insatia- bilis homicida, draco venenatus. (320), cuius aulem animam infelicem, onustam pondere peccatorum, demones absque dubio rapuerunt, et eam in profundum inferni, ubi est tumulus tormentorum et nulla redemptio, proiecerunt. (329, ap. Muratori Script. It. xv.)* What is not often the case, the facts which this author presents fully bear out the bitterness of his words. Every lover of Italian poetry must remember the grievous punishment to which Dante has consigned Ecchellino.

*E quella fronte ch' ha'l pel così nero
E Azzolino.* Inferno, xii. 110.

Or, as the whole passage is given by his *only* translator,—

— Onward we mov'd,
The faithful escort by our side, along
The border of the crimson-seethy flood.
Whence, from those steep'd within, loud shrieks arose.
Some there I mark'd as high as to the brow
Immers'd, of whom the mighty Centaur thus:
“ Those are the souls of tyrants who were given
To blood and rapine. Here they wail aloud
Their merciless wrongs. Here Alexander dwells,
And Dionysius fell, who many a year
Of war wrought for fair Sicily. That brow
Whereon the hair so jetty clust'ring hangs
Is Azzolino.” Cary.

characters of blood. Fortunately, the course of our history by no means requires that we should detail the horrors of his rule, which are to be found so abundantly in the Italian chroniclers ; and we willingly turn from accounts of the sufferings of those illustrious prisoners who were condemned to die by the lingering pangs of famine, of the countless victims tortured, mutilated, buried in pestilential dungeons, or dragged to scaffolds yet dripping with the blood of yesterday, which crowd their pages. The death of Frederic, as it removed the sole barrier between Eccellino and independence, so it increased his lust for slaughter ; and when the axe of the executioner appeared too slow for the despatch of the throngs adjudged by him to perish, they were committed to the indiscriminate massacre of his soldiery.

In March, 1256, the Archbishop of Ravenna, as legate of the holy see, commenced preaching at Venice a crusade against this tyrant. Indulgences similar to those granted to the pilgrims of the holy sepulchre were announced as the reward of all who should take the cross in this new service ; and the tranquillity of their native land, the honour of the church, and the salvation of their souls were the animating motives by which their zeal was inflamed. The proximity of Eccellino to their own dominions, and the danger which could not but be anticipated from his restless ambition, induced the Venetians to enrol themselves in great numbers under the holy banner. Yet more to encourage the ardour which had been thus awakened among them, the custody of that banner itself was intrusted to one of their nobles ; a second was named marshal of the crusading army ; and the numerous fugitives from Padua who had sought refuge in the *Lagune*, forgetful of all former national jealousies, gave a signal proof of their confidence in the republic by appointing another of her citizens their own *podestà*. Padua was won with little difficulty ; for, by a singular oversight, the very precaution which the general of Eccellino had adopted for its defence materially contributed to its reduction. In order to hinder the ascent of the Venetian galleys, he turned the waters of the Brenta into a new channel, and by their diversion removed the chief obstacle against the march of the invading army. The city was stormed and pillaged, during seven days, by its pro-

fessed friends. The prisons were thrown open ; from each of the two largest three hundred captives were delivered, and six other places of confinement were found crowded with miserable objects of all ages and either sex, curtailed of some limb, deprived of sight, or, perhaps, yet more barbarously mutilated. One of the most frightful dungeons of the tyrant was, in after-times, dedicated to purposes of science ; and when the university of Padua, already distinguished even in the twelfth century, boasted, under the patronage of Venice, no less than eighteen thousand students, the lofty "tower of Eccellino" was converted into an observatory. Over its entrance might be read an appropriate inscription :

*Qua quondam infernas turris ducebat ad umbras
Nunc Venetum auspicio pandit ad astra viam.**

Eccellino received the news of this loss of the most powerful city in his dominions with unbounded fury. Eleven thousand troops, more than a third of his whole army, were natives of Padua or the surrounding towns ; and, doubtful of their fidelity, he determined to place it beyond all hazard. By a forced march he gained Verona ; and there, having collected these battalions in a single quarter of the city, and previously disarmed them, he demanded that they should voluntarily surrender that portion of their comrades levied in the particular district of Padua which had been first lost by the treachery, as he averred, of the garrison. Rejoiced that the tyrant's rage had centred upon a part, when the whole believed themselves to be its object, the deluded men willingly obeyed. Another and another like demand succeeded, on equally frivolous pretences, till the whole band melted away and was distributed through his various prisons. Hunger, thirst, destitution, cold, despair, or the scaffold, from time to time, diminished their numbers, so that in the end, out of eleven thousand men, the flower of the Paduan territory, little more than two hundred were permitted to survive.

The courage and skill of Eccellino, his superior generalship in the field, and the treacherous arts which he employed as dexterously as his arms, prolonged this war through no

* Once the black porch of hell's infernal tide,
Now to the stars, while Venice rules, I guide.

less than three years. Much of this delay may be attributed to want of discipline, and even of bravery, in the troops to whom he was opposed, and to the ignorance and superstition of the priests who conducted them. More than once the confederacy was exposed to the risk of entire dissolution ; and, for a while, defeat trod closely upon defeat. But Eccellino's faithlessness, even to those allies whom he had bound to himself by interest or by terror, at length worked his destruction. Three Ghibelin chiefs, each of whom believed himself to be in his separate confidence, by mutual revelations discovered his treachery to all. Indignant at this complicated perfidy, they made overtures to the league, pledged themselves to pursue the traitor to extermination, and solemnly swore that no decree from the emperor, no dispensation from the pope, should release them from this oath till its purpose was accomplished. Three months sufficed for the fulfilment of their vow ; and the enemy against whom it was directed was hunted down, abandoned by his troops, wounded, and taken prisoner. He refused all surgical assistance, tore the bandages from his bleeding limbs, and thus expired almost if not altogether by his own hands.

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CHAPTER V.

FROM A. D. 1259 TO A. D. 1310.

First War with Genoa—The Crown of Thorns—Fall of the Latin Empire—Truce—Change in the Election of a Doge—Establishment of the Inquisition at Venice—Second War with Genoa—Battle of Curzola—Marco Polo—Battle of Gallipoli—Peace—Closing of the Great Council—Sketch of the Venetian Nobility—Conspiracy of Bocconio—Dispute with Clement V. respecting Ferrara—Papal Interdict—Conspiracy of Thiepolo—Institution of the Council of X.

DOGES.

A. D.

| | | |
|-------|---------|------------------------------|
| | | RAINIERO ZENO. |
| 1268. | XLVIII. | LORENZO THIEPOLO. |
| 1274. | XLIX. | GIACOMO CONTARINI—abdicates. |
| 1280. | L. | GIOVANNI DANDOLO |
| 1289. | LI. | PIETRO GRADINIGO. |

THE succours afforded by Venice to the crusade against Eccellino were but inconsiderable; but she was soon about to be engaged far more deeply in a protracted and sanguinary struggle, in which her own peculiar interests were mainly concerned. Of the few powers which were able to maintain any commercial rivalry with her, Genoa was now the most prominent. Many causes tended to enhance their mutual jealousy; and the seeds of bitterness and hatred were deeply imbedded in the similarity of their governments and their pursuits, of their ambition and their enterprise. The exclusive dominion of the Adriatic, which was asserted and maintained by the former state, was balanced by that which the latter considered only as a retributive claim upon the Mediterranean; and it was, therefore, with very natural alarm that the Genoese beheld the large acquisitions made by their rivals during the last half-century, in the Morea and Archipelago.

But a single spark was wanting to kindle their ill-concealed hostility into open flame, and it was in the Levant that the train thus ripe for combustion was fired. A

trifling dispute on a point of honour was permitted to lead to war ; and this war in its progress involved no less a consequence than the overthrow of the Latin empire. Among the very few possessions still remaining to the Christians in Palestine was the long-contested and almost impregnable city of Acre. Within its walls was assembled a motley throng of various nations : the Counts of Tripoli and Edessa, the King of Jerusalem himself, Knights Hospitallers and Templars, Pisans, Venetians, and Genoese—all who still lingered in the East in the hope of recovering dominion or of preserving trade, were here established in their own separate quarters, submitted only to their own national jurisdictions, and jealously asserted independence on each other. The right to the church of Saint Sabba, which had not been very precisely appropriated, was claimed both by the Venetians and the Genoese. The pope, when appealed to, decided for the former ; the latter, in despite of this arbitration, by a far more summary process, secured possession of the holy building, and fortified it. Then, following up their aggression, and supported by Philip de Montfort, the governor, they attacked and pillaged the magazines of the Venetians, and drove them from the city.

We need not detail nor dwell upon the particulars of two naval combats which succeeded this outrage. In both the Venetians triumphed ; they burned the fleets of the Genoese, chased their residents in turn from Acre, and off Tyre captured twenty galleys, and slew more than two thousand men. But the most singular result of this warfare was seen in the contradictory alliances to which it gave birth. Hitherto, whatever slight part the Venetians had taken in the factions of Italy annexed them to the Guelphs ; and their inclination towards Rome had been plainly shown in the crusade against Eccellino. In the present instance, the aid of Manfred of Sicily, a natural son of Frederic II., was the most valuable which they could receive ; for his coasts were likely to afford points of frequent encounter with the Genoese, whom he regarded not only with a similar maritime jealousy to that cherished by the Venetians, but with yet further resentment as old and active coadjutors with his papal enemies. To his friendship, therefore, Zeno had recourse. On like principles of mutual hatred against a third power, and of mutual agreement to forget former

injuries, the doge concluded with Pisa, for ten years, a treaty
 of alliance offensive and defensive. A far more un-
 A. D. 1204. natural union was formed by the Genoese. The
 sceptre which Theodore Lascaris had grasped at
 Nice, during the convulsions of the Greek empire, had been
 A. D. 1222. greatly strengthened in the hand of his son-in-law
 1225. and successor, John Ducas Vataces. Even the vices
 1259. of a second Theodore do not appear to have dimin-
 ished this power; and but for his minority, his son
 John Lascaris, might have retained his hereditary
 throne. By one of those revolutions so common in oriental
 history, not unaccompanied with treachery and bloodshed,
 Michael Palæologus, perhaps the most illustrious, certainly
 the most enterprising of the Greek nobles, obtained the
 guardianship, and afterward the crown, of the young prince.
 His first act after his usurpation was the invasion of
 Thrace, and a bold attempt upon the suburb of Galata itself.
 In this he failed; but it needed little foresight to determine
 that the feeble hands which now ruled the Latin govern-
 ment were not likely to oppose any long resistance to so
 active and ambitious a foe. Of the six emperors who had
 struggled through the half-century which succeeded the
 conquest of Constantinople, the second Baldwin was by far
 the least qualified to encounter the perils which surrounded
 him. He had thrice made the circuit of Europe as a sup-
 pliant for assistance, and he now returned to his Eastern
 capital impoverished and dishonoured. It is unnecessary
 to speak of the countless sordid littlenesses to which poverty
 reduced him; but there are two facts partially connected
 with the history of Venice too remarkable to be omitted.
 Philip, the son of this last Latin emperor of Constantinople,
 was pawned by his father to some burghers of his capital,
 as the only security which they would accept for a loan in-
 commensurate with the pledge; and the prince was trans-
 ferred by them to the custody of some Venetian merchants,*
 for greater safety. To other moneyed usurers of Venice was
 intrusted a deposit, which, whatever in our present estima-
 tion may be its genuineness and intrinsic value, was con-
 sidered at the time of which we are writing as beyond all
 price. The frequency of imposture has, no doubt, attached

* *Manutus (apud Gesta Dei per Francos) Secreta Fidel. Cruc. II. 418.*

much both of ridicule and suspicion to the generality of relics ; and the silly pretensions to miraculous virtue which have been asserted for them, have increased these unfavourable impressions. But I know not why those vivid emotions, that glow of affection, that veneration and love with which we contemplate other monuments of wisdom and of virtue, should be repressed and chilled when we turn to like memorials of our faith. If the reputed crown of thorns was really that borne by our Lord during his sufferings, or (what in the present instance is the same thing) was really *believed* to be such, the piety which coveted its possession demands not our sarcasm but our respect. On the credit of this treasure, a sum amounting to about 7000*l.* of our money had been borrowed by the empire : the time stipulated for its redemption approached ; and if not redeemed, its property would become absolutely vested in Querini, a Venetian, who had advanced the loan. Louis of France, who has been canonized for his devotion, profited by the opportunity ; and after an agreement with Baldwin, discharged the debt and conveyed the relic to Paris. The *Sainte Chapelle* was built and consecrated for its reception. It was jealously guarded* and magnificently enshrined ; and after the lapse of four centuries, on one of those occasions by which, as a corrective to human pride, the weakness of the good and the follies of the wise are permitted to exhibit themselves in strong light, by being produced as a voucher for enthusiasm, it excited the surprise and curiosity, the credulity or the skepticism, of all the Christian world.

While Baldwin, reduced to this destitution, tottered on his throne, the fierce spirit of the Genoese saw, in an alliance with Michael Palæologus, a hope of wreaking vengeance upon their detested rival ; and, careless of the means, provided Venice were depressed, they covenanted for the recapture of Constantinople. The treaty exists by which they bound themselves to furnish the emperor of Nice with a certain number of vessels at a fixed price ; the emperor, in return, promising them immunity from tolls and customs in all his ports. That catastrophe which the

* The treasures of *La Sainte Chapelle*, before the French revolution, were exhibited only *en vertu de lettres de cachet, par ordre du roy.* The miracle asserted to have been wrought on Pascal's niece is well known to everybody.

blind passion of the Genoese prepared, the imprudence of the Venetians completed. The chief strength of the garrison of Constantinople, the only French and Venetian troops by which it was manned, were employed by the *podestà* of the latter nation in an idle expedition. On the return of their fleet from an unsuccessful attempt on Daphnusia, the

A. D. Latin empire had ceased to exist : a bold *coup de main* had placed the defenceless capital in the hands 1261. of a partisan of Michael, and the Venetian galleys arrived but in time to afford refuge to the affrighted Baldwin and his court.

On the entry of Michael Palæologus into Constantinople, he confirmed the privileges for which the Genoese had stipulated ; but at the same time, wisely considering how much of the wealth of his restored empire must depend upon general commerce, he encouraged the Pisan and Venetian merchants to remain by similar grants. The Genoese, being likely to presume upon their alliance, were removed to Galata ; the other foreigners were permitted to dwell within the city. To each nation was assigned its own quarter ; and, as distinct republics within the empire, they enjoyed their own laws and submitted to their own governors. That of the Venetians is henceforward known by the title *Bailo*. Although thus far protecting her civil residents in his metropolis, the emperor continued his warlike operations against Venice. Negropont was attacked ; Scio, Lemnos, and Rhodes were conquered. The first was bestowed as a fief upon the Genoese, and was retained by them for three centuries. Perhaps the Venetian pride was still more deeply wounded when their rivals were permitted to demolish a palace which had been once assigned to Venice in the capital of the East, and to transport its materials to their own shores, as records of their influence and their implacability.

The bare recital of the naval combats which succeeded between the Venetians and the Genoese would be a tedious and unprofitable task. Little more indeed is to be told than that, in a course of eight years, no less than five sanguinary battles were fought, and that in all the Venetians triumphed. Whatever valour might be displayed, whatever glory might be won, neither permanent benefit to themselves nor injury to their enemies accrued from these victories. They resembled our own naval engagements with the Dutch, during

the seventeenth century, in which the vanquished of to-day was prepared to renew the battle almost on the morrow, rather than those mighty triumphs of later times, which neither needed nor permitted frequent repetition, and in which Rodney and Nelson swept the ocean at a single blow. We pause indeed with surprise on the energy, and, if we may so speak, on the intense vitality of the Genoese. ^{A. D.} Antæus-like, they appear to have been overthrown on their peculiar element, only to acquire new strength by their fall. Beaten off the Morea, they were still able to insult their conquerors even in their own ports. In an engagement under the heights of the Sicilian Trapani, not one of their vessels escaped the flames, the flood, or the enemy; yet, notwithstanding this horrible carnage which had almost exterminated their mariners, and the desertion of their ally Palæologus, who, despairing of their cause, had signed a separate truce for ^{A. D.} 1265. five years, we find them, in the following campaign, disembarking a force which destroyed the Venetian colony in Candia; and again, with similar bravery but former ill fortune, confronting their rival on the coast of Tyre. It was not till the project of a fresh crusade rendered a maritime peace necessary for the safe transport of that gallant and devoted band which St. Louis was assembling to perish miserably in Africa, that the competitors would listen to accommodation. And even then, when all Christendom stepped forward to arbitrate their quarrel, and the seeming interests of religion were suspended on its adjustment, such was the bitterness of their animosity, that peace was rejected, and a truce for a few years was all that ^{A. D.} 1269. could be forced on their reluctant acceptance.

It was during the rage of much intestine commotion in each of the republics that this war was waged. The revolutions of Genoa are foreign to our subject; and it must suffice to say that she was agitated both by a struggle with her aristocracy, and by the threatened invasion of Charles of Anjou. In Venice, the necessary expense of war had occasioned the impost of additional taxes, which even success could not strip of their unpopularity; and the unreasonable rabble of its capital, proud of glory, but unwilling to pay its price, rose in the streets, attacked the ducal palace, and plundered many of those belonging to nobles who were

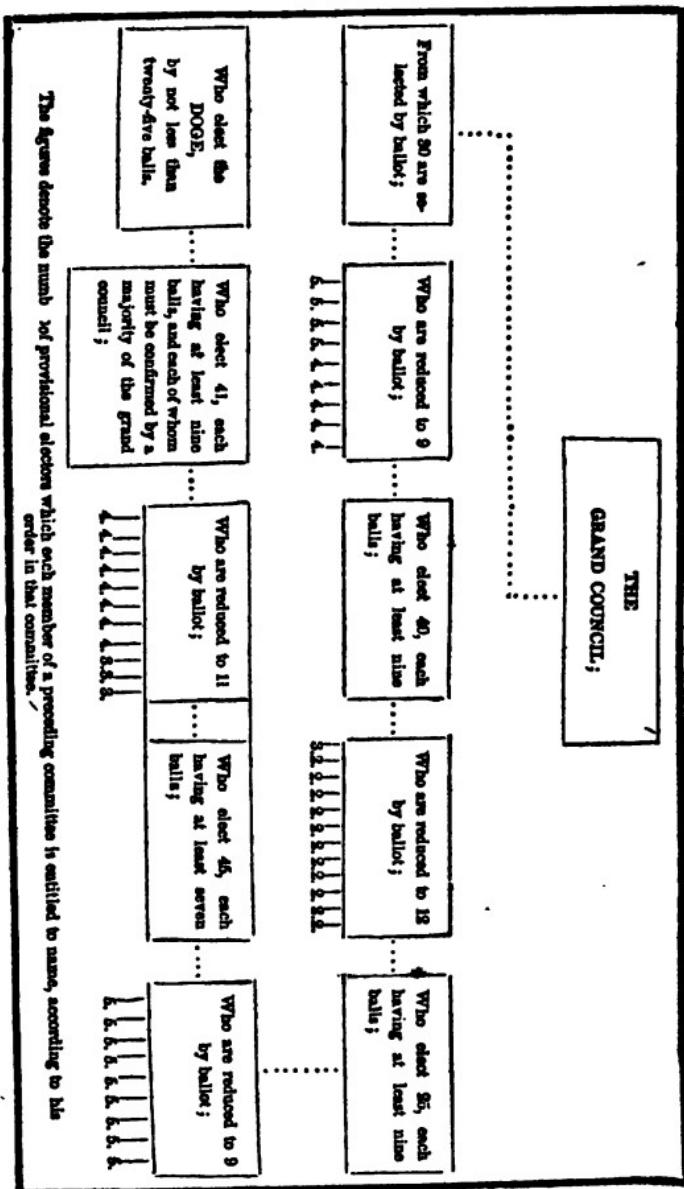
odious or suspected. The insurrection was suppressed by the prompt summons of some neighbouring garrisons, and punished by numerous and severe executions: and, at this period of disorder, a new election became necessary, by the death of Zeno. The change introduced in its form exhibited a very singular combination of chance with free choice; and an endeavour was made to exclude the possibility of influence by any predominating faction, through a complication of processes which no sagacity of intrigue could hope either to foresee or to direct.

The aid of the diagram on the opposite page will render intelligible this intricate form, which continued in force as long as the republic existed. The forty-one* electors to whom the choice had hitherto been confided were abolished. In their place, thirty members were set apart, by ballot, from the grand council. These were reduced, by ballot also, to nine: by whom forty provisional electors were named; the first four counsellors each naming five, the five last, four; and the whole being afterward approved by at least five voices out of the nine. Ballot reduced these forty to twelve, the first of whom named three new electors, each of the others two; and the whole twenty-five resulting from their joint choice being confirmed by nine voices. From these a committee of nine was again obtained by ballot; of which each member appointed five electors, confirmed by seven voices. These forty-five were diminished, by ballot, once more to eleven, of whom each of the first eight named four persons, the last three, three: and the forty-one thus formed, having been ratified by nine voices, constituted the definitive electors; provided, after the scrutiny of each name by the grand council, it united an absolute majority of their suffrages. If it failed to do so, the last committee of eleven was bound to select a substitute. It will be perceived that the electors, therefore, were produced by no less than five ballots and five scrutinies.† Immediately after

* One was added in 1249, to the original forty, in order to prevent the recurrence of an equal division, which, in 1228, had protracted an election during more than two months, till it was decided by lot.

† Daru has illustrated this complicated operation by the diagram which we have borrowed; and also by the following Italian rhymes, which fall very legitimately into English memorial doggerel.

*Trenta elegge il consiglio, . . . From the council's nomination
Di quei nove hanno il maggio: Thirty meet; nine keep their station;*



The figures denote the number of provisional electors which each member of a presiding committee is entitled to name, according to his rank in that committee.

their approval by the council, the electors were conducted into an apartment from which, until the announcement of their decision, all egress was peremptorily forbidden. No communication with those without was permitted, and the very windows were most jealously closed. To lighten the tedium of their confinement, they were magnificently entertained at the public expense ; and every wish expressed by them, which did not involve in it a possibility of breaking through their isolation, was promptly gratified. But so ludicrously precise were the cautions adopted to prevent the appearance of any individual preference, that whatever any one member of the elective body asked for, during the conclave, was given, not to him singly, but, with him, to each of his brethren also. Thus, on application by a pious elector for a rosary, forty-one rosaries were carried into the saloon ; and a similar request, after the invention of printing, for a copy of *Æsop's Fables* entailed the necessity of a search through all the booksellers' shops in the capital, for so many impressions of that book as would suffice to convince the whole body of electors that no partiality was designed in favour of one.

The electors having chosen three *priori*, demanded the assistance of two secretaries, who were subjected to the same personal restrictions with themselves. Each elector then, according to his seniority of age, placed in an urn a scroll, written by his own hand, containing the name of some member of the grand council whom he considered fittest for doge. One of the secretaries drew out these scrolls at hazard, and read each name in turn ; and as each

*Questi elegon quaranta,
Ma chi piu in lor si vanta
Son dodici, che fanno
Venti cinque: ma stanno
Di questi soli nove,
Che fan con le lor prove
Quaranta cinque a punto;
De' quali undeci in conto
Eleggono quarant' uno,
Che chiusi tutti in uno,
Con venti cinque al meno
Voti, fanno il sereno
Principe che coregge
Statuti, ordini e legge.*

Forty next by these are chosen,
Who, by lot, become a dozen.
Five-and-twenty then combine
To produce another nine;
Hence are five-and-forty given,
Who, diminished to eleven,
Are by forty-one succeeded;
Of whose final votes are needed
Five-and-twenty, to create
The presiding magistrate;
The serene, by whom, elected
Thus, our statutes are protected.

was read, any one of the electors might state at length whatever objections occurred to him. If the candidate proposed were himself an elector, he was instructed to withdraw while any accusation was preferred, but he had liberty to reappear and answer it. The final decision was obtained by ballot ; and that candidate was successful in whose favour twenty-five suffrages were united.

The first doge who emerged from this labyrinth was Lorenzo Thiepolo. He was an ardent supporter of the aristocratical interests ; and some years before, ^{A. D.} 1268, in open day, and in the public streets of the capital, he had been poniarded, and left for dead, by two leading members of the opposite faction. Distinguished as a naval commander, and by a victory which he had won during the Genoese war, he was a favourite with the sailors ; who, on the announcement of his election, raised him on their shoulders, and carried him in triumph to his palace. Hence arose a custom, which in the end was the sole share retained by the people in the election of their chief magistrate ; the artificers of the grand arsenal claimed the right of bearing the new doge in his chair, when he made the circuit of the piazza of St. Mark on the day of his election. The battle in which Thiepolo had gained distinction, and endeared himself to the fleet, was that fought in the Syrian seas at the commencement of the war with Genoa, which led to the expulsion of her merchants from Acre. To commemorate their triumph, the Venetians transported to their capital, among other spoils of that city, two square marble columns, inscribed with hieroglyphics and Syrian characters, which decorated the chief portal of the disputed church of Saint Sabba. These trophies were erected between the Broglie and the baptistery of St. Mark's, where they still remain.

Immediately after the great change above noticed, an office was created, the only one connected with government which belonged to the *cittadini*. The great council, the senate, and the tribunals, all required secretaries, and from that body, to which the nobles were ineligible, the council nominated a grand chancellor. Invested with extraordinary dignity, this officer was wholly debarred from power ; he had a seat in all the assemblies, but he was denied a suffrage ; he took precedence of every member of the

council, except the *procuratori* of St. Mark and the counsellors of the doge; the great seal of the republic was deposited in his custody, his allowances were splendid, and he could not be removed during life. On his inauguration, the *procuratori* who accompanied him to the *collegio* yielded him the *pas*, as the nobles also did to such citizens as attended the procession. His obsequies were celebrated with as much pomp as those of the doge himself; he was interred in St. Mark's, a funeral oration was pronounced over his remains, and the senators who retained their scarlet robes at the burial of the prince, mourned for the chancellor in sables. So highly esteemed was this office, that, during the times in which nobility was to be purchased, the attainment of the chancellorship was more than once preferred, whenever such choice was afforded, to inscription in the golden book.

A. D. 280. A few years after the accession of Giovanni Dandolo, Nicholas IV., the reigning pope, partially compassed an object which had been much coveted during the reigns of no less than ten of his predecessors; and a concordat was arranged for the establishment of the inquisition in Venice. But the wariness of her government took especial pains to prevent this foreign jurisdiction from attaining any power which might affect its own; and the immunities of temporal dominion were carefully fortified against the encroachments of ecclesiastical ambition. At no place in which the holy office obtained a seat did it so little further the purposes of its founders as in the *Lagune*. Its tribunal in the capital consisted of the papal nuncio, the Bishop of Venice, and one other ecclesiastic: neither of which latter could act without the permission of the doge. In the provinces, the pope, in like manner, had the barren privilege of nomination; but his nominees were powerless if the doge enforced his veto. Three senators in Venice, three magistrates in the provinces, completed the inquisitorial band; and, without their presence, all proceedings were absolutely null. They might suspend the deliberations and prohibit the execution of the sentences of their court, if they judged them contrary to the interests of the republic. Secrecy, the boasted master-engine of the institution, here lent not its efficacy to strengthen the pontifical arm: for the assistants were

bound by oath to reveal all proceedings to the senate, and no appeal nor evocation to Rome was permitted. Numerous offences, of which the holy office elsewhere asserted its right of cognizance, here were exempted ; and heresy, in its strictest sense, was the sole crime reserved for its jurisdiction. Thus, it was said that it was not just that the Romish church should extend her authority beyond her own members, and therefore neither Jews nor Greeks were amenable to her courts. In bigamy, the second marriage, being void, was esteemed an infraction of the civil code, not a violation of a sacrament ; and provided they had not insulted any spiritual ordinances or offices, blasphemers, usurers, and sorcerers, those most copious sources of victims to the inquisition, were emancipated from its grasp. All offences of priests were tried by secular judges ; and even the funds of the holy office were managed by a Venetian treasurer, and inspected and controlled by the senate. The property of condemned prisoners reverted to their heirs, instead of being confiscated ; and, after the invention of printing, the tyranny of state-licensing was divested of all interference from the inquisitors, and committed entirely to the civil magistrates. Such were some of the chief barriers which effectually prevented that bloody and ferocious tribunal from striking its baneful roots deeply into the soil of Venice. Its establishment there, and the restrictions by which it was limited, have been accurately recorded by the ablest writer whom the republic ever produced ; and the history of Paolo Sarpi may be perused with advantage as teaching both the artifices of Rome and the wisdom which countervailed them.

The reign of Pietro Gradenigo is remarkable both for its foreign and domestic incidents. Even while the electors were deliberating, after the death of Giovanni ^{A. D.} Dandolo, the strong current of popular feeling against ^{1289.} that aristocracy which was so soon to engross the whole power of the state, manifested itself fiercely but vainly. A crowd assembled under the windows of the palace, and on their own authority, proclaimed Giacopo Tiepolo doge. Far from possessing the boisterous requisites for a demagogue, this candidate of the people was a man of benevolent temper and of gentle, if not timid, spirit ; and the very qualities which probably occasioned his irregular election, induced him to

withdraw from a city in which his presence encouraged sedition. Six days elapsed before the electors ventured to announce their choice. It had fallen upon one in all points calculated to oppose that growing spirit of insubordination, which, had it been successful, would have been justly styled the love of liberty : and by placing Gradenigo in power, the oligarchical faction obtained an instrument well fitted to consummate the great changes which had been long gradually maturing in the constitution. Before entering, however, upon these political alterations, we must briefly advert to some foreign transactions.

On the expiration of the truce with the Genoese, hostilities were renewed with more than former implacability, and with an entire reverse of former fortune.

A. D. 1293. Genoa, by her connexion with the Greeks, had acquired great strength in the East ; she was mistress of Scio, she possessed many establishments on the shores of the Black Sea, and among them the important town of Caffa, which commands the entrance of the Sea of Azoph. Above all, she held, as a fief of the empire, Pera, the suburb of Constantinople ; and, by its occupation, she virtually retained the keys of that great capital, she controlled its fishery and its customs, without her permission not a bark could navigate its harbour, and as she closed or threw open her granaries, famine or abundance waited on her pleasure. Pera, nevertheless, was as yet unfortified, and it was easily surprised and burned by a Venetian armament ; which, passing on to the Black Sea, spread terror through its coasts, and ravaged the equally defenceless Caffa. The detachment employed on this latter service imprudently wintered in the Crimea, and paid for its daring by the loss of more than half its crew and equipments. The Genoese were speedily revenged ; and the temporary abandonment of Pera was, in the end, most advantageous to their interests ; for, having received permission to fortify it, they raised their works with incredible rapidity, and soon rendered themselves as formidable to their allies, as they became impregnable by their enemies. In the mean time sixty-six galleys, a portion of a larger fleet of one hundred and sixty sail, in which were embarked twenty-five thousand troops, all natives of Genoa, penetrated the Adriatic ; where, off Curzola, they encountered a superior Venetian force. Undismayed

by the appearance of no less than ninety-five hostile vessels, Lamba Doria detached fifteen of his own, with orders not to engage till they could bear down with the wind, during the heat of action. This bold manœuvre succeeded. The shock of the fresh and unexpected galleys was irresistible; and never was a heavier defeat suffered than that inflicted on the Venetians: sixty-five of their ships were burnt, and eighteen, with seven thousand prisoners, taken. Among these prisoners was one whose celebrity, on another account, has reached our own times; and it is, perhaps, to the captivity of Marco Polo that we are indebted for the written history of his travels. After an absence of nearly forty years, spent for the most part in countries as yet unexplored, this enterprising Venetian had returned from the Tartar court of Kublai Khan, to recount the wonders of extreme Asia to his fellow-citizens. His great nautical experience obtained for him the command of a galley in this unfortunate action, in which he was foremost in the attack, was wounded, and taken prisoner. To beguile the tediousness of four years' imprisonment, he committed his adventures to paper: and owing to the surprise and admiration which they excited even among the Genoese, he obtained his freedom. A less happy fate awaited the Venetian admiral, Andrea Dandolo. The Genoese, exulting in their success, and forgetful of that respect which a generous spirit gladly pays to a brave though vanquished enemy, loaded their illustrious prisoner with chains, and exposed him conspicuously to the rude gaze of the fleet, as a signal evidence of their victory. Before they reached their capital Dandolo had deprived them of this barbarous triumph; for, leaping from the bench of the galley, he dashed his head forcibly against her side, and was borne on shore a corpse.

The following year witnessed a second naval defeat of the Venetians, off Gallipoli, less disastrous than that which we have just related only inasmuch as the forces engaged were inferior in numbers: and sixteen ships out of four-and-twenty fell into the power of the conquerors. The seas could no longer be disputed with the Genoese; yet how little in these times were the general principles of maritime warfare understood! After the loss of more than one hundred ships, while Venice was unable to man a squadron which could face the overwhelming

A. D.
1294.

superiority of her enemy, we read with surprise of a gallant adventurer, Sclavoni, who, with no more than four galleys, escaped the vigilance of the Mediterranean cruisers, made a bold and successful attack upon the capital of the victors, burnt one of their merchantmen anchored in the port and under the very walls of Genoa, and returned to the *Lagune* laden with a considerable booty.

This useless and destructive contest, in which each party, without acquisition of real glory, exhausted its own strength while injuring its adversary, was closed for a while by the mediation of Matteo Visconti, Lord of Milan, and A. D. 1299. peace was concluded as a breathing-time for a fresh war. Genoa had obtained the right of dictating terms, and she prohibited any armed Venetian ship from entering the Black Sea or touching on the coast of Syria for the next thirteen years.

Two years before he was disengaged from the second Genoese war, Gadenigo obtained a decree of the great council, which may be esteemed the corner-stone upon which the future pure oligarchy of Venice was consolidated. Hitherto, if we have spoken of different classes existing in this state, the distinction between them must be considered much more as conventional, than as resulting from positive institutions. The population of Venice can scarcely be said to have been separated into patrician and plebeian, by any of those marked and decided boundaries which struck a deep and early root in other communities. Her origin was friendly to the preservation of as much equality as can practically exist in any large society; and the want of all landed territory had kept her aloof from the introduction of the feudal system, with its accompaniments of lordships and vassalage. Still, wherever numbers of men are congregated into one body, *some* pre-eminence must be attained; *some* individuals will command greater respect, and consequently exercise greater influence, than their contemporaries. This superiority, in the first instance, will probably be accorded to talent; and those who possess the most intimate knowledge of their fellow-men will be most likely to obtain the earliest guidance of their conduct. Wealth will next establish a claim to regard; and as riches are more frequently transmitted to posterity than ability, the first distinctions of what may be called hereditary rank will accrue to the

families possessed of most substance. It is easy to perceive in what manner these advantages, when once obtained (and the lapse of very few years in civilized society cannot but bestow them), will lead to a virtual, if not to an acknowledged, separation of classes ; and it is natural to suppose that those who, in any way, are elevated above their brethren, will find both the readiest access to magisterial offices and the surest methods of retaining them : so that hence also arises another source of distinction. Such appears to have been the progress of what, in conformity with the habits of other countries, we must name the Venetian nobility.

The great council, placed, in its very outset, beyond the reach of popular suffrage, had gradually eluded even the slight control of annual election. Without being able to trace the progress of usurpation step by step, it may be enough to say that it attributed to itself the right of naming the twelve electors by whom it was to be renewed ; and consequently that, in point of fact, it re-elected itself. Hence, for the most part, its members were chosen from the same families, or rather generally consisted of the same individuals who had once obtained seats in it. Still, at least in name, it was neither permanent nor exclusive. No one affirmed an hereditary claim to its honours ; no one asserted that he belonged to it otherwise than as a representative : and the poorest citizen, however conscious that he could never hope for enrolment upon its list of sages, contented himself with a belief that there was no other obstacle to so bright a fortune except improbability.

Even this consolatory fallacy was now to be dissipated. In the last reign a proposition had been made that the annual electors should be instructed never to choose any member who had not himself already been admitted, or who was unable to prove the admission of some ancestor. Dandolo, who favoured the popular interests, opposed this project, and it was rejected : Gradenigo obtained the ^{A. D.} 1296. same object by a more circuitous route. Assuming that, as the annual elections had almost invariably fallen upon the same individuals, those individuals had, therefore, established a right, he did not so much support the claim of re-election to a body of which he already held them to be constituent members, as the necessity of determining whether

they were still worthy of continuing in it. This artful representation, as will be seen at once, wholly changed the nature of the council. To effect his purpose, the doge proposed that a list of all who had been members during the last four years should be submitted to the XL., and that every member who united twelve of their suffrages should retain his seat. At the expiration of a year, the same scrutiny was to be repeated. To prevent the appearance of an entire exclusion of all but this favoured class, three members of the council were instructed to form a supplementary list of citizens eligible without having already sat. These were limited in number by the signory, and were balloted for in like manner by the XL. It is needless to speak of the class from which this list was selected : it was similar to that of the existing members. The decree passed, and bears in history the name of *The Closing of the Council* (*La Serrata del mazor Couseio*). It was not such in fact ; but it was the first step towards it, and the others were rapidly trodden. During the next two years the A. D. 1298. XL. returned exactly the same members. In the third, all names were excluded from the supplementary list but those of persons who themselves or whose 1300. ancestors had been members. A subsequent statute spoke of the positive exclusion of those who were contemptuously termed *new men*. Not long after, a 1315. register was opened, in which all qualified persons having attained the age of eighteen were required to inscribe their names : and, lastly, the periodical renewals, 1319. and the supplementary lists were swept away ; the existing council was declared permanent and hereditary ; and whoever could prove his ancestral right was permitted, when five-and-twenty years old, to assert his claim, as the form ran, *per suos et per viginti quinque annos* ; to be enrolled in the golden book (*Il Libro d'Oro*) of nobility, and thus to be admitted as a member of the great council. Thirty dispensations—at first decided by lot, afterward sometimes accorded to merit, but more frequently put up to sale—were also granted, by which such young patricians as obtained them might take their seats at the age of twenty-one. They were named *I Barberini*, because they were elected on the feast of San Barbo.

In later days, the *nobili* were arranged, if not formally,

at least conventionally, in four classes. The most distinguished, *Gli Elettorali*, were descendants of the twelve tribunes by whom the first doge had been elected in the year 697 : to these were annexed four families, whose representatives, in conjunction with the above-mentioned twelve, signed an instrument for the foundation of the Abbey of San Georgio Maggiore, in the year 800. Of these, the former are sometimes spoken of as *I dodici Apostoli*,* the latter as *I quattro Evangelisti*.† Six other families also were admitted without hesitation to the first class ;‡ and there were two or three besides whose claim was more or less contested : this class furnished more than half her doges to the republic. The second class consisted of those whose ancestors were members of the grand council at the time of its closing, and each of these had its doge. The third comprised thirty families admitted after the war of Chiozza, in return for the great services which they had rendered to the state ; three of these also have produced a doge. The fourth and lowest class originated among Venetian citizens, Candiotes, or other provincials, who, during the Turkish wars, upon which we have not yet entered, gratified their own vanity and relieved the necessities of the republic by purchasing nobility at the market-price of one hundred thousand ducats. One only doge was elevated from this division, and, singularly enough, it was Manini, the last sovereign of his country. These four classes of nobility altogether seldom exceeded twelve hundred in number, but to these must be added another, which may be considered as honorary. It included such illustrious foreigners (and among these more than one crowned head was numbered) as had solicited or received inscription in the golden book. This honour was very jealously guarded, and it was not without extreme difficulty that Gregory XIII, obtained admission for one of his bastard sons. All illegitimate children of the native nobility, even those who had been legitimated by a subsequent marriage, were rigorously excluded ; and the council, after long deliberation upon the

* Badouari, Barozzi, Contarini, Dandoli, Falieri, Gradenighi, Memmi otherwise Monegari, Michieli, Morosini, Polani, Sanudi otherwise Canniani, Thilepoli.

† Bembi, Bragadini, Cornari, Giustiniani.

‡ Delfini, Querini, Sagredo, Soranzo, Zeni, Ziani.

style by which the pope's *nephew* should be recognised, at last decided upon a form sufficiently ambiguous to remove its scruples; *Il Signor Giacomo Buoncompagno, stretto parente di sua Santità*—a near relation of his holiness.

Besides the above distribution of the nobles into classes, there was a yet more summary mode of distinguishing them: the rich were termed *I Signori*; the poor, who formed two-thirds of the body, and who chiefly inhabited the cheap quarter of San Barnabo, *I Barnaboti*. Or, retaining *Barnaboti* for the last, the wealthiest were named in a sort of slang language, *Sangue blò* or *Sangue colom-bìn*, blue blood or pigeon's blood; the moderately rich, *Morel di mezo*, middle piece. The pride of birth, however, was discouraged as much as possible in Venice, when it led to comparisons which might occasion disunion among the nobility; and one of the ordinances of that most fearful tribunal which we shall have occasion to notice hereafter, the inquisition of state, directed itself, with what to most will appear disproportionate severity, against such as disparaged their brethren by boasting of their own superior antiquity. The spies entertained among the patricians were warned to report all expressions of this tendency; the first offence was punished with six months' imprisonment in the *piombi*, those fatal dungeons under the *leads* of the ducal palace, from which few returned alive; for the second, the indiscreet babbler was to be drowned secretly.* An anecdote is related by Amelet de la Houssaye, which, perhaps, may have been invented for the sake of the jest which it contains, but which nevertheless well illustrates the spirit of the Venetian government on this point. One of the *Da Ponte* family, in a dispute with a gentleman named *Canale*, boasted that the *ponti* (bridges) were much above the *canali* (canals); his antagonist replied, that the *canali* were in being long before the existence of the *ponti*. The senate interfered, and informed the one that it possessed power to fill up the *canals*; the other, that it could knock down the *bridges*.†

It must not be supposed that this revolution was effected as quietly as it is here related, or that the people at large were insensible to their exclusion from all share in their

* Aggiunta al capitolare dell*i* Inq. di Stato, 7.
† Hist. de Gouv. de Venise, l. 61.

own government. Gradenigo addressed himself with much art to the ruling passions of the different parties in the state. A few individuals of influence had been inadvertently omitted in the first lists of the great council ; and most of these were soon afterward specially summoned to it. The populace, unfitted and little anxious for real power, yet proud of familiar approach to those by whom it is administered, were cajoled by an empty condescension ; when the doge invited the fishermen of the capital to a public banquet, and permitted them to embrace him at its conclusion. So gratifying was this privilege, that the commonalty became unwilling to relinquish it, and it passed into an annual custom. But in after years, when the aristocracy was firmly established, spirits like those of Caius Marcius were found among the nobles, which revolted from this "supple bonneting" of the rabble ; and a Contarini, when in authority, refused the ill-assorted feast and the kiss of mock fraternity. His denial, if persevered in, might have shaken Venice to its base. When the fishermen assembled on the appointed day, and clamorously demanded admission, it was long before the reluctant doge was prevailed upon to appear, and even when he did so he was masked. His guests, approaching him individually, inflicted the kiss ; and as a monument of their triumph, they afterward placed in the church of Sta. Agnese a picture representing the ceremony.

In little more than two years, however, from the first closing of the council, the discontented found a leader ; and three citizens of the middle class of 1299. society meditated the assassination of the doge, and a remodelling of the government. Few circumstances of this conspiracy are preserved to us beyond the names of the chief actors and its suppression. By the vigilance of the doge, or the imprudence of the insurgents, the plot was discovered before it was ripe for execution, and Bocconio, Baldovino, and Giuda perished on the scaffold.

Some of the native writers have fixed upon this time as an epoch in Venetian history, and have affirmed that the year 1303 witnessed the termination of the adolescence of the republic. "Ever since," observes an author whose pre-science manifestly did not extend so far as the nineteenth century, "she has proceeded with the gravity and prudence

of mature age; and being a happy mixture of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, it is likely, with the assistance of the gods, that she will endure to eternity!"*

An embroilment with the holy see for a while diverted the attention of the republic from domestic quarrels, only that they might in the end be renewed with increased virulence.

The succession of Ferrara was disputed, on the A. D. death of Azzo VIII. of Este, by Francesco, a brother, 1308. and Fresco, a natural son,† to each of whom it had been bequeathed by separate wills of the deceased prince. The Venetians, calculating upon some private advantage by interference in a neighbouring contest, espoused the interests of the latter, and despatched to his support six thousand men, by whom Ferrara was assaulted, part of the town burned, and the citadel captured. Yet the bastard of Este, although thus far successful, was unable to hope for stability of power, for he was not wholly free from a suspicion of having accelerated his father's death,‡ and he had brought the horrors of civil war upon his country. Execrated, therefore, by his fellow-citizens, he abandoned his throne almost as soon as he had reconquered it, and the Venetians received, or pretended to receive, a cession of his rights in their own favour. On the unsatisfactory plea that the mother of the illegitimate prince was a native of the *Lagune*, they claimed possession of Ferrara, as a return for the thousand ducats with which they had pensioned its abdicated sovereign.§ But another pretender had arisen from the new seat of the papacy at Avignon; and Clement V.,

* See the authorities referred to by M'Pherson, *Annals of Commerce*, vol. i. p. 472.

† Sismondi calls him grandson, vol. iv. p. 281. But the *Chronicon Estense*. Morosini, and Verdizzotti, all concur in making him son.

‡ Azzo VIII. himself is accused by Daute of a similar crime; and his father, Obizzo II., is represented as condemned to the same punishment as Eccellino. So far as we have been able to trace them, the charges of cruelty against the father, and parricide against the son, are equally unfounded.

Quell' altro ch' è biondo

E Obizzo da Este, il qual per vero,
Fu spento dal figliastro su nel mondo.—Inf. xii. 3.

That with flaxen locks,
Obizzo of Este, in the world destroyed
By his soul step-son.—*Cary.*

§ Morosini, ix. Verdizzotti, x.

tracing back the rights of the pontificate to the very origin of the city, avowed that the church, like a tender mother, once again opened her bosom for the reception of a long-lost child ; and that “ although leviathan, the wily serpent, and author of all evil, had poisoned the hearts of the Venetians, Rome would not be backward in rescuing her desolate offspring from the jaws of a roaring lion, which were opened to devour.”

To the utter exclusion of all hereditary claims of the rightful family, the possession of Ferrara was now, therefore, contested by strangers. The pope despatched a nuncio to Venice ; and on the rejection of his demands he excommunicated the doge, and put his dominions under interdict. The bull issued on this occasion is a memorable record of the fury, the arrogance, and the folly of Rome. ^{A. D. 1309.} The Venetians were likened in it to Dathan, Abiram, Absalom, and Lucifer—personages who appear to have been always retained for employment on similar occasions ; for we call to mind more than one usage of them at times in which our own princes excited the wrath of the Vatican. Unless Ferrara should be surrendered within a month, all nations were forbidden from holding any commerce with Venice ; the doge and his republic were to be stripped of all privileges and fiefs which might have been granted heretofore by the holy see ; his subjects were released from their oath of fidelity to him ; all Venetians were declared infamous, incapable of administering public functions even among themselves, of appearing in courts of justice, either as plaintiffs or defendants, and of bequeathing or inheriting property ; and their children, to the fourth generation, were excluded from all secular and ecclesiastical dignities. These penalties after two months' delay were to be enhanced yet further by the actual deposition of the doge and all his ministers, the annulment of all contracts and obligations which had been entered into with them, the confiscation of the entire property of every Venetian, and the summons of all Christendom to arms in order to reduce them to slavery.

Clement's spiritual censures were followed up by vigorous demonstrations, far more likely to produce effect upon the stubborn disobedience of Venice, than all the thunders of ecclesiastical wrath. A cardinal took the field with an army

of crusaders, defeated the force opposed to him, pursued it under the walls of Ferrara, and, aided by the inhabitants, who willingly opened their gates, obtained possession of the city. The loss of the Venetians was most severe : in the battle and the occupation of the town, and from the more secret vengeance inflicted afterward by the citizens, not less than five thousand men (and some writers have extended the victims to thrice that number) fell beneath the sword or the stiletto. The citadel, their sole remaining post, was soon afterward abandoned, and its garrison found safety in flight.

Meantime, whether from a superstitious awe of the papal denunciation, or, as is more probable, from a general jealousy of the wealth and power of a state, who, without territorial possession, mated herself with kings, Venice was proscribed throughout Europe. Not only the Italian ports, but France, England, Arragon, and Sicily, impelled either by weakness or avarice, pillaged her factories and confiscated her merchandise. An embargo was laid upon her ships ; many of her residents and mariners were killed ; yet more were condemned as slaves, and sold even to the Infidels, at whose hands they were likely to encounter a more gentle treatment than at those of their Christian brethren. "Happy indeed for us was it," is the strong language of a Venetian historian, "that the Saracens also were not among the baptized."* Throughout the *Dogado* and its dependencies all services of the church were interrupted. The clergy avoided a land groaning under malediction ; the sacraments, for the most part, were denied ; and it was not without difficulty that even the newly-born received admission to the faith by its solemn initiatory rites, and that the dying were permitted the consolation of the *viaticum*. These privations, and the sufferings resulting from them, the hardness and despair produced by the suspension of religious ordinances, the dearth and impoverishment which were the natural fruits of commercial stagnation, increased in no slight degree that evil feeling which already existed among the citizens towards their government. Gradenigo was personally unpopular, and nothing is easier in such a case than the assumption that public calamity

* Verdizzotti, x.

has its source in the individual who is the object of public hatred. He had not as yet, it is true, advanced the dominion of the aristocracy to the full height which we have shown that it ultimately attained ; but more than enough had already been effected to mark the goal to which his course was tending. Even among the nobles, not all were satisfied : some there were who disdained to participate authority which they considered their own exclusive right, with the few *newer* members whom it had been deemed politic to associate with them in the council ; and more than one debate of a stormy character had passed between them within the walls of the assembly. Of the class which was left without hope of elevation, it is needless to speak. With the multitude excuses for insubordination are never wanting ; and in the present instance, they might, perhaps, be advanced with less than usual deviation from truth. The whole period of Gradenigo's reign had been disastrous ; and the obvious remedy which presented itself was to be found in a change of masters.

Such, doubtless, was the opinion inculcated by the chiefs of three distinguished families who undertook the attempt. The conspiracy was not, as before, organized by plebeians. Boemondo Thiepolo counted two doges among his ancestors, and his brother* Giacomo, if the voice of the people had been obeyed, would now himself have borne that title. Married to a daughter of Marco Querini, Boemondo found in his adoptive father an ambition of which his brother had shown himself devoid. The Querini traced their origin to ancient Rome ; and, passing by the three doges of their name who had governed in the eighth century, they boasted of the proud line of the Sulpitii, and their descent from the imperial Galba. The house of Badouero, the third which completed this band, had swayed Venice at one time by almost hereditary right ; and no less than seven doges had sprung from their race. These families were hostile to Gradenigo and his policy ; and besides the general tenor of his administration, personal causes of dislike are mentioned, little creditable to the conspirators. Querini had been deprived of the command

A.D.
1310.

* Logier and Daru make Boemondo a son of Giacomo Thiepolo ; Sismondi a brother. The latter is supported by Verdazzotti, ix. p. 307.

of that fleet which afterward fought so unsuccessfully with Lamba Doria; his brother had been convicted of peculation; and the hands of Thiepolo himself were not more pure; he had been fined for a misappropriation of money in a government which he held in the Morea.* Their connexions were naturally extensive, and embraced personages of the most illustrious rank; so that among many others involved in their design were counted the Lord of Paros and a *procureur* of Saint Mark.

The fierce watchwords of faction, the party names of Guelph and Ghibelin, were heard in Venice for the first time during the progress of this conspiracy, and the doge was stigmatized as belonging to the latter party, because he had opposed the pope. His death, therefore, was said to be no less demanded by insulted religion than by violated liberty. One only voice appears to have been raised against the headlong blindness of open insurrection. Giacopo, the brother of Marco Querini, pointed forcibly to the miseries and crimes inseparable from any change effected by violence; he urged his comrades to mistrust their own zeal, and he recommended the more slow and more gentle, but far more secure, more honourable, and more genuinely patriotic resistance which was legitimately open to them as members of the council. "Revolt and massacre," he said, "were but evil guides to peace and order." His wise suggestions, however, were overruled by the precipitance of less experienced, perhaps of less disinterested counsellors; and the passionate, the thoughtless, and the ambitious preferred the redress which was to be stormed by arms, to that which might be conciliated by argument. It was resolved to obtain forcible possession of the *Piazza di San Marco* and the ducal palace, to put the doge to death, to dissolve the grand council, and to replace it by the ancient form of annual election.

The 16th of June was named as the day of rising; and Badouero, who possessed extensive influence in Padua, the cradle of his family, engaged the assistance of a large body of the inhabitants of that city, ever pleased with an occasion of showing enmity against Venice. Arms were to be found abundantly in all the houses of the great; and when

* *Baldi, v. Moretta, tr.*

the conspirators mustered the roll of their dependants and retainers, and added to them the promised aid from Padua, they felt assured of numerical superiority over the troops of the doge. The Great Canal, which separated Venice into two chief parts, was crossed by the single bridge Rialto, adjoining which stood the *Palazzo Querini*. The occupation of this bridge was most important; and before daybreak on the appointed morning it was secured by Thiepolo, to whom was committed the attack on the ducal palace. It had been planned that, as soon as this stronghold should be forced, Thiepolo's division was to remain under arms in the *Piazza di San Marco*, till the arrival of Badouero with his Paduans. Then they might jointly spread over the remaining quarters of the city, seize the arsenal, and act further as their exigencies required.

The morning of the 16th was ushered in by a violent tempest, and, during its continuance, amid vivid lightning and deluges of rain, the gathering took place before the *Palazzo Querini*. Whether from inability to proceed during the rage of the storm, or from want of discipline, some time was lost in outrages of little avail towards the main object, but congenial to the instruments which were to effect it; and the minutes which were consumed in the pillage of some warehouses, and the destruction of some public records, must be counted as not a little contributing to the ultimate defeat of the enterprise. At length the signal was given to advance, and the bridge Rialto being crossed, as the narrowness of the streets admitted but a few files abreast, two divisions were formed, which it was intended should debouche upon the *Piazza* by different avenues. One of these was intrusted to Marco Querini and his son Benedetto; the other was led by Thiepolo. Querini arrived first at his destination, and what was his astonishment at finding himself confronted by a strong array of regular soldiery!

No suspicion of treachery attached to any of the conspirators; but the movements of a large body can seldom be concealed, and an unpopular government is always keen-sighted. The frequent assemblies in the *Palazzo Querini* had been marked and reported to Gradenigo. The movements on the preceding day had excited special suspicion, which new announcements every hour increased; and as

the penetration of the doge detected the approach of insurrection, so his vigour promptly furnished means for its suppression. He assembled round him, during the night, the signory, the counsellors of state, the chiefs of the XL. and such nobles upon whose services he could depend. He summoned from the less important posts of the city all the guards which could be spared, and concentrated them on the Piazza ; these were strengthened by the mechanics of the arsenal ; and almost at the moment at which the front of Querini's column showed itself, a large detachment from the garrison of Chiozza arrived by a forced march. The contest was bloodily maintained till the two Querini fell, and their adherents gave way. Thiepolo, advancing by the street of the Clock-tower, was encountered by the doge in person ; and learning the defeat of his companions, and despairing of success, he retired upon the bridge. As he threaded the narrow street of *La Merzeria*, a woman named Justina,* watching her opportunity, dropped a heavy stone from a lofty window as he passed. He escaped the blow ; but the head of a page, who followed closely, and who bore his standard, was dashed to atoms. Thiepolo, having gained the bridge, which at that time was framed of wood, severed all communication by cutting it, and removing the boats moored below to the opposite bank. Then, fortifying himself in the *Piazza di Rialto*, he looked anxiously for a junction with the confederates under Badouero from Padua. In this hope he was disappointed : at the moment of their disembarkation they had been attacked by a body of the doge's guards, and meeting with a resolute conflict where they had anticipated nothing but unresisted plunder, they abandoned their leader and returned to their vessels. Badouero and such persons as could lay claim to gentle blood were immediately beheaded ; and among them, Giacopo

* Gorani, a veracious republican who visited Italy in 1793, and abused kings and popes, religion and government, under the full influence of the spring-tide of the French revolution, makes this woman kill Thiepolo unintentionally, and not by a stone. The passage is an amusing specimen of accuracy, *un vase de fleurs i chapp des mains d'une femme imprudente, termina la vie de ce héros* (iii. 355). The pension granted to Justina sufficiently proves that her act was intentional ; and Pietro Justiniani, who has given a lively description of the conspiracy, expressly calls the instrument *lapis molaris* (Lib. iv. p. 64). In Coryat's *Credities* may be found some particulars similar to those stated by Gorani.

Querini suffered for his fidelity to an enterprise which he disapproved. The gibbet was erected for the inferior conspirators, and many who avoided the immediate vengeance of legal punishment by taking refuge in neighbouring states, had a price set upon their heads, and were but reserved for the slower dagger of the assassin. Thiepolo had the good fortune to save himself. Having maintained his post for some time amid his barricades, he received from Gradenigo the announcement of an amnesty, and a proposal for negotiation. Wisely estimating by a correct standard the heavy preponderance of chances against a rebellious subject, when treating with an offended sovereign, he disentangled himself from the toils thus spread for his destruction, and embarking with a few of his most attached followers, escaped from the *Lagune*. His palace and that of the Querini were razed to the ground; on the site of the latter, to stamp it with ignominy, were erected public shambles, and all monuments inscribed with their names or armorial bearings were defaced. A pension was assigned to the woman who had thrown the stone; and in order to preserve the memory of her action, a banner was suspended from the window at which she stood, every year, on the return of the anniversary of the conspiracy,* and a solemn service of thanksgiving was instituted in commemoration of the peril from which the republic had been delivered.

But the most important consequence of the suppression of this conspiracy was the voluntary abandonment of their own freedom, to which it led, by that class which had as yet been only employed in curtailing the freedom of others. If the government were to continue as now framed, it was manifest that some security must be provided against the recurrence of a danger similar to that from which it had just extricated itself. Treason had been nurtured and matured in the bosom of the very capital without discovery, and even without suspicion. But for the sagacity of one man, the lapse of a few hours more would have witnessed the overthrow of the aristocratical polity. And even if it could be supposed that such a doge as Gradenigo would never be wanting to the government, there was little prudence in confiding to a single arm, encumbered with the

* P. Justiniani, *ut sup.*

administration of many other important duties, a care which ought to engross the entire attention and vigilance of those to whom it was assigned. A commission was therefore appointed with extraordinary powers, addressed, in the first instance, to the extinguishment of the ashes of the late insurrection. Ten magistrates (*I Dieci*), named as a criminal court, were invested with a plenary inquisitorial authority, with an entire sovereignty over every individual in the state, and with freedom from all responsibility and appeal. Their duration was at first limited to ten days; but this was six times prolonged for a like period; then for a year; soon after for five; next for ten; and, in the end, ^{A. D. 1325.} the tribunal, with a great extension of powers, was declared to be permanent. These powers so frequently and fearfully intermingle themselves with the course of our future narrative, that we shall here but briefly touch upon them. The ten officers from whom the court derived its title were chosen annually, at four different assemblies of the grand council. No two of them might be members of the same family, or even bear the same name; and from the colour of their robes of ceremony, they were termed *I Neri*, or the black. To these, in after-times, were added also the signory, as assessors, termed, for a like reason, *I Rossi*, the red. In their judicial administration, the members of this council inquired, sentenced, and punished, "according to what they called reason of state. The public eye never penetrated the mystery of their proceedings; the accused was sometimes not heard—never confronted with witnesses: the condemnation was secret as the inquiry; the punishment undivulged like both."* Nor was this all: instituted solely for the cognizance of state crimes, this tribunal gradually attributed to itself the control of every branch of government, and exercised despotic influence over the questions of peace and war, over fiscal enactments, military arrangements, and negotiations with foreign powers. It annulled at pleasure the decrees of the grand council, degraded its members, deposed and even put to death the chief magistrate himself. An object alike of terror and of detestation to those whom it oppressed under the pretext of salutary guardianship.

* Hallam. *Middle Ages*, ch. iii. p. 2. page 342, vol. i.

ship, it yet prolonged an uninterrupted sway during five centuries; and our wonder at the political problem of its long-continued existence is not a little heightened when it is remembered that the great council, upon which, of all other classes, it weighed with far the most grievous burden, might, by refusing its votes at any one of the four elections in each year, have abolished its hateful yoke for ever. That it did not do so may be attributed in the outset to a false view of the nature of the magistracy, and to a belief that it was necessary for the preservation of the state. As its tyranny became more distinctly manifest, it may have been protected by an ambitious but unworthy hope which each noble cherished, of one day wielding its immeasurable powers with his own hands. And, lastly, after a lapse of years had so far interwoven it with the general polity as to make it seem an almost inseparable part of the whole, it might be saved by a mistaken, but little blameable, reverence for antiquity; by that fond clinging to established institutions which, perhaps not unwiseley, is backward to remove even an abuse, lest its extirpation may endanger the entire fabric upon which it is ingrafted. We are here seeking a cause, not justifying a fact. Existence itself may be purchased at far too dear a price: but if existence alone were all that is demanded for the honour of a state and the happiness of its subjects, it might not be too much to affirm, that the long stability of Venice was mainly owing to the most remarkable, the most formidable, and the most execrable part of her government—**THE COUNCIL OF X.**

CHAPTER VI.

FROM A. D. 1310 TO A. D. 1355.

Removal of the Interdict—War with Mastino della Scala—Intrigues of the Da Carrara—Restoration of their Family to Padua—Legend of the Three Saints—Revolt of Zara—Plague—Third War with Genoa—Battle of Caristo—Battle of the Bosphorus—Mediation of Petrarch—Battle of Cagliari—Genoa under the Protection of Visconti, Archbishop of Milan—War with Milan—Battle of Sapienza—Marino Faliero.

DOGES.

A. D.

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| | | PIETRO GRADENIGO. |
| 1310 | LII. | MARINO GIORGI. |
| 1311 | LIII. | JOVANNI SORANZO. |
| 1328 | LIV. | FRANCESCO DANDOLO. |
| 1339 | LV. | BARTOLOMEO GRADENIGO. |
| 1343 | LVI. | ANDREA DANDOLO. |
| 1354 | LVII. | MARINO FALIERO—beheaded. |

DURING the reign of Giovanni Soranzo, Clement V. was prevailed upon to remove the interdict ; and popular belief has attributed this reconciliation with the holy 1311. see to the adroit or the pious self-abasement of the Venetian ambassador, Francesco Dandolo. He is said to have presented himself in a penitential garb, with an iron collar fastened round his neck, at the table of the pontiff, and to have remained there prostrate, till, by tears and sighs, he had extorted a favourable reply to his petition. While he bent in the attitude of supplication, some of the cardinals who were present spurned him as a dog ; and it has been supposed that the *sobriquet*, *Il Cane*, by which he is best known to his countrymen, arose from this incident. The cardinals may, no doubt, have displayed the arrogance imputed to them, but the surname, *Cane*, to which also they may, perhaps, have made an opprobrious allusion, was borne long before by many ancestors of Dandolo. The suppression of a revolt in Candia, the recovery of Zara, and some short and successful hostilities against Genoa, were the only

interruptions which disturbed a beneficial repose of sixteen years ; after which, the indignities endured by Francesco Dandolo, for the sake of his country, were A. D. 1327 repaid by an elevation to her sovereignty. Under his rule, the loss of a naval action with the Genoese was more than balanced by a territorial acquisition, the first made by Venice on *terra firma*, which, therefore, merits somewhat more of detail than the inconsiderable transactions over which we have just hastened.

Among the powerful nobles whom the long troubles of the north of Italy had raised to petty sovereignty, Mastino della Scala had established one of the largest principalities. Stretching from the Adriatic to the Tuscan Sea, it embraced Verona, Treviso, Vicenza, Bassano, Brescia, Parma, Reggio, and Lucca, and in the end included Padua, wrung from its lords, the family of Carrara. Each acquisition had raised against Mastino a fresh secret enemy, who coveted some opportunity of revenge ; his fall, however, may be more justly attributed to his brother Alberto, whom he had named governor of Padua, than to himself. False even where he affected to bestow confidence, Alberto triumphed by force over the domestic honour of Ubertino da Carrara, during his occasional absence from Padua. Her wrong was revealed by the injured wife ; but the wily Italian dissembled his resentment, listened with a smile to the unseemly jests passed upon his disgrace, and, in spite of sarcasm, contentedly retained, over the helmet of his escutcheon, the two golden buffalo horns, wreathed with the eyed feathers of a peacock, which formed the crest of his house. These armorial bearings served but to remind him of his revenge, long protracted, deeply meditated, and cautiously planned in concert with his uncle Marsilio. The latter, while engaged on a mission to Venice, was seated one day next the doge, at a public spectacle ; and, unobserved by others, he whispered in the prince's ear a question not to be misunderstood. "If any one would put you in possession of Padua,* how would you recompense him?" "By giving him its mastery," was the prompt reply ; and on these few words was based an alliance which ended in the overthrow of Della Scala.

* Durm, in relating this anecdote, has said, "Verona;" but Padua, as Sanuto gives it, and as the event sufficiently proves, was the city named.

By a crafty representation of the great advantages to be derived from a trade in salt, Carrara prevailed upon Della Scala to establish some works in that part of his territories which skirted the *Lagune*; and the Venetians, seizing the pretext, and loudly proclaiming against this infringement of their ancient monopoly, marched thirty thousand men to support their right under the command of Pietro di Rozzi, who had been expelled by Mastino from Parma. This system of intrusting their armies to the command of a foreigner was constantly observed in future. But the general was not uncontrolled. He was accompanied by two Venetian *provveditori*, civilians, unacquainted with the operations of war; who in most cases appear to have thwarted and retarded the speed indispensable for the success of military designs, with quite as much vexatious pertinacity as was exercised towards our own Marlborough by the Dutch deputies of later times. The King of Bohemia and the republic of Florence joined their arms against Della Scala, and the Carrara guided their enterprise to a successful termination. It was not likely that the intrigue which they had been conducting should escape suspicion by the politic Mastino. Though unacquainted with its precise details, he knew enough to convince him that the Carrara were dangerously employed; and he sent peremptory orders to Alberto for their immediate assassination.

The singular circumstances attendant upon their more than one escape are related with a lively air of truth by the chronicler Gataro. It seems as if they had rendered themselves necessary to the pleasures of Alberto, and that he was loath, though he had deeply wronged them, to relinquish their society. He received Mastino's instructions with pain; yet not venturing to disobey them, he invited the Carrara to his palace, and posted bravoes at the foot of the great staircase, with orders to despatch them as they mounted it. It was late on a summer's night when the messenger found the intended victims in their garden, half undressed, and preparing for bed. Having left Alberto but a short time before, they expressed some surprise at this hasty recall; but, mounting on the same horse in their slippers and loose attire, they rode to the palace. Alberto was standing in a balcony to witness their death; and Marsilio, looking up as he rode under it, called out in a gay

tone of familiarity, “*Che Diavolo!* what do you want now? we have but just left you, and we wished to get some rest in bed. Do you mean to keep us up all night as usual?” Their lives were saved by this easy sally; touched by which, Alberto relented, and felt unable to drain the blood of his boon companions. He hastily desired them to return—“there was some mistake—he had not sent for them.” On the morrow he showed them Mastino’s letter; and upon their protestations of innocence he embraced them, with an assurance that he thought his brother foolish in seeking the diminution of his friends. Mastino, still resolved on their destruction, despatched new orders to Padua. The messenger was a confidential attendant; and he was strictly enjoined not to deliver the letter which he bore into any hands but those of Alberto himself. On his arrival he found the governor engaged at chess, while the Carrara were looking on. Alberto inquired after Mastino’s health; and on being informed that he had sent him a letter, he desired Marsilio to read it; but the messenger, faithful to his trust, refused to deliver up the despatch, and informed the governor of the precise orders which he had received. The game was now finished; but Alberto, impatient to commence another took the letter, and handed it to Marsilio. At the conclusion of his second game he carelessly inquired the contents; and was satisfied by hearing that his brother had written about the purchase of some foreign falcons. Meantime the Carrara hastily communicated with the commander of the allies; and on the day following their escape from this great danger, they opened the gates of Padua, and transferred it to their friends. After the loss of this chief city the fall of Della Scala was rapid; and betrayed and pressed on every side, he accepted a treaty dictated by Venice, which stripped him of the greater part of his dominions. The republic, having fulfilled her engagement with Marsilio da Carrara, who did not long survive, retained for herself only the districts of Treviso and Bassano; but these were enough to work a fundamental change in her hitherto insular policy, and to involve her in a long series of perilous warfare for comparatively unimportant possessions.

On the death of the elder Carrara the chief authority in Padua became vested in his nephew ^{A.D.} ~~1338.~~ *Ubertino.* The rest-

lessness of his ambition soon rendered him suspected at Venice; and there were not wanting many voices in the senate to denounce him as a dangerous enemy. He is accused of having employed the stiletto, which had already become a powerful engine in Italian politics, to silence these opponents. On one occasion also he acquired material strength by an outrage most daring indeed, but of a less dark character than assassination. Having learned the names of the senators most opposed to his interests, he seized them by night, and hurried them bound, gagged, and blindfolded in gondolas to Padua. There, in his own palace, he repeated to the astonished prisoners the arguments, the very words, which they had employed against him in the councils, with which he had become acquainted through his spies. At first he sternly threatened death; till, having succeeded in striking terror, he gradually relaxed the menace, and granted them liberty, under an oath that they would bury the adventure in secrecy, and for the future adopt a policy more consonant with his wishes. On the same night they were reconveyed to their homes; but, on parting, Carrara warned them of the dangers of perjury; significantly implying, that he who could find agents for their abduction, had a much speedier vengeance at his command; and that he could readily employ daggers if they either betrayed or deceived him. The threat was effectual. The transaction was never revealed by the Venetian senators; nor was it at all known till many years after its occurrence, and then only by the dying confession of some of the ruffians who had been engaged in its execution. Gataro,* who has preserved this remarkable anecdote, implies the full success resulting from Ubertino's bold act by stating, that during his lifetime the signory of Venice said nothing more of war.

The reign of the succeeding doge, Bartolomeo A. D. Gradenigo, presents a continued scene of turbulence 1339. and bloodshed in Candia. We willingly hasten over this uninteresting and unnecessary recital; but we shall pause on an incident of another character, strongly impregnated with the superstitious temper of the age. It must be borne in mind, that the legend which we are about

* Apud Muratori, xvii. 28.

to produce is recorded by more than one authentic chronicler, and that it was sufficiently believed to give birth to a public religious ceremony. In the year 1341, an inundation of many days' continuance had raised the water three cubits higher than it had ever before been seen in Venice; and during a stormy night, while the flood appeared to be still increasing, a poor old fisherman sought what refuge he could find by mooring his crazy bark close to the *Riva di San Marco*.* The storm was yet raging, when a person approached, and offered him a good fare if he would but ferry him over to *San Giorgio Maggiore*. "Who," said the fisherman, "can reach *San Giorgio* on such a night as this? Heaven forbid that I should try!" But, as the stranger earnestly persisted in his request, and promised to guard him from harm, he at last consented. The passenger landed; and having desired the boatman to wait a little, returned with a companion, and ordered him to row to *San Nicolo di Lido*. The astonished fisherman again refused, till he was prevailed upon by a further confident assurance of safety, and excellent pay. At *San Nicolo* they picked up a third person, and then instructed the boatman to proceed to the two castles at Lido. Though the waves ran fearfully high, the old man by this time had become accustomed to them; and, moreover, there was something about his mysterious crew which either silenced his fears, or diverted them from the tempest to his companions. Scarcely had they gained the strait, when they saw a galley, rather flying than sailing along the Adriatic, manned (if we may so say) with devils, who seemed hurrying with fierce and threatening gestures to sink Venice in the deep. The sea, which had hitherto been furiously agitated, in a moment became unruffled; and the strangers, crossing themselves, conjured the fiends to depart. At the word the demoniacal galley vanished, and the three passengers were quietly landed at the spots at which each respectively had been taken up. The boatman, it seems, was not quite easy about his fare; and, before parting, he implied pretty clearly that the sight of this miracle after all would be but bad pay. "You are right, my friend," said the first passenger, "go to the doge and the *procuratori*, and assure them that, but for us three,

* *Riva*, a footway running along the banks of a *rio*, or small canal.

Venice would have been drowned. I am St. Mark ; my two comrades are St. George and St. Nicolas. Desire the magistrates to pay you ; and add, that all this trouble has arisen from a schoolmaster at *San Felice*, who first bargained with the Devil for his soul, and then hanged himself in despair." The fisherman, who seems to have had all his wits about him, answered, that he might tell that story, but he much doubted whether he should be believed : upon which St. Mark pulled from his finger a gold ring, worth about five ducats, saying, " Show them this ring, and bid them look for it in my treasury, whence it will be found missing." On the morrow the fisherman did as he was told. The ring was discovered to be absent from its usual custody, and the fortunate boatman not only received his fare, but an annual pension to boot. Moreover, a solemn procession and thanksgiving were appointed in gratitude to the three holy corpses, which had rescued from such calamity the land affording them burial.*

It was under the dogeship of Gradenigo that our own Edward III. endeavoured to negotiate a maritime alliance with Venice against Philip of France. His chief hope was founded on the assistance which the Genoese had afforded his rival. But the republic had need of all her naval force to meet the insurrection of the Candiotes, and she declined the treaty. Gradenigo was succeeded by A. D. Andrea Dandolo, who, amid the cares of an active 1343. reign, found time to reform the judicial code, and also to narrate the actions of his predecessors. His *Chronicle*, which we have already described as devoid of interest to the general reader, is, nevertheless, invaluable as a standard of reference ; and we owe it, if nothing more, at least the praise of accuracy.

Zara, ever chafing against the Venetian yoke, and finding in the Hungarians ready abettors of each new revolt, once more called for chastisement during this reign. In a siege of eighteen months, Venice employed twenty-seven thousand men, and the almost incredible powers of that mechanical artillery which, ere long, was to be superseded by the simpler, yet more destructive force of gunpowder. Perries are here mentioned, constructed by Francesco della

* Sanuto, apud Muratori, xxii. 608.

Barche, which threw masses of stone weighing three thousand pounds, and heaved from the batteries of the besiegers such rocks as might have been used in that fabled combat in which Ossa was piled on Olympus. The artificer himself is said to have fallen a victim to his own inventions; and by the accidental discharge of one of his instruments of death, to have been launched headlong against the walls which he was preparing to overwhelm. During the tardy operations of this investment, Louis of Anjou, King of Hungary, advanced to the relief of the garrison; and on his total defeat, the glories of Marino Faliero, the Venetian commander, were raised to their full height. For a while, the enemy hemmed him within the lines which he had constructed for his defence, and so far intercepted his inland communications, that he was obliged to depend upon Venice even for his supplies of water. But a battle, unadvisedly risked by the Hungarians, released him from this jeopardy. Eight thousand of the assailants perished in Faliero's lines, and Zara, deprived of all hope, surrendered at discretion.

The plague which ravaged Italy in 1348, like that of Athens, and from a similar cause, has become one of the landmarks of history; and Boccaccio, no less than Thucydides, is indebted for the powerful effect A.D. 1348. of his terrific picture to his fidelity in representing the calamitous scenes of which he was an eyewitness. Venice bore her share in the general suffering. In the early part of the year, an earthquake, which visited her at intervals for fifteen days successively, overthrew many buildings, and spread terror among her citizens. A similar convulsion had been the forerunner of pestilence in the far distant kingdom of Casan; but the fiery gulfs which there swallowed up the trembling inhabitants—the showers of unknown and monstrous insects, which, if they fell alive, destroyed by their venomous stings; if dead, by the corruption which they exhaled—the stupefaction which so paralyzed both men and women that they became motionless as statues, a judgment which we are assured would have converted the infidel hearts of their khans, but that they perceived Christians to be affected in like manner with themselves—all these marvels were confined to Tartary.* Sweeping

* Giovanni Villani, xii. 83. *apud Muratori*, viii.

over the Levant, the plague desolated Syria, Chaldea, and Mesopotamia. It then passed to Egypt, and the Archipelago ; and Turkey, Greece, Armenia, and Russia cowered beneath its scourge. Some Genoese, who sought escape from the Black Sea, conveyed it to Sicily, and hence it spread rapidly over the neighbouring continent, already a prey to famine. When it had once surmounted the Alps, Brabant was the sole district of Europe unvisited by its contagion ; and even the perpetual snows of Iceland formed no barriers against its depopulating fury. During the six months which it raged at Venice, it is believed that more than half her population was destroyed ; and in order to recruit her loss, the rights of citizenship were decreed to foreign settlers, after two years' residence. Yet she was afflicted in far less proportion than many of her fellow-sufferers. Florence mourned a hundred thousand of her citizens ; at Naples sixty thousand, at Genoa forty thousand perished ; and in the Sicilian Trapani, not one individual remained alive !

Pestilence was succeeded by war ; and if the hand of nature, in her wrath, appeared to level greater numbers at a single stroke, the harvest of death reaped by the sword, as it was much longer in gathering, so was it eventually far more abundant. A private fray between a Tartar and a European merchant, at Tana, near Azoph, in which a blow was avenged by the immediate death of the former, kindled the indignation of the natives. They rose in a body, plundered the factories, and assassinated many of the residents. In order to punish this violence, the Venetians and Genoese mutually agreed to suspend all commercial intercourse with the offending coast ; but the former, disregarding their engagement, thought to profit by an entire engrossment of the abandoned trade, and renewed it for themselves singly. This perfidious attempt was justly met by an embargo on all their ships engaged in the commerce of the Black Sea ; and though as yet ill recovered from her exhaustion by the plague, Venice, in return, despatched a fleet to the Archipelago, to revenge the affront. A bloody engagement between nearly equal forces, in the Bay of Caristo, in Negropont, terminated to the advantage of the Venetians ; but their success increased the animosity rather than diminished the energies of the

defeated. Venice sought to strengthen herself by new alliances ; and Peter IV., who filled the throne of Arragon, at that time the third maritime state in Europe, and who disputed the possession of Sardinia and Corsica with the Genoese, willingly listened to the overtures of their rivals, concluding with them a treaty which stipulated the provision of one-and-twenty galleys for the service of the republic. In the East, where Cantacuzenus was greatly irritated against the Genoese, Venice obtained yet further aid ; but the whole extent of force which the falling empire was able to provide, as its contingent to the league, amounted to no more than eight poor galleys.

The combined fleets of Arragon and Venice, on entering the Archipelago, were shattered and dispersed by a tempest ; and the Genoese thus gained time to increase their preparations. After some unimportant manœuvres which occupied the remainder of the year, early in the ensuing February, the allies passed the Dardanelles, and with seventy-five galleys under the command of Nicolo Pisani, approached the Bosphorus. Against this force the Genoese Doria could oppose no more than sixty-four sail, but the numbers were soon rendered more nearly equal by the dastardly flight of the Greeks ; and the Genoese ships of that period were of larger frame than those of their enemies. The battle began towards sunset and at the commencement of a storm ; and the imagination can scarcely picture a scene of greater horror than must have been presented by the closeness and ferocity of a naval engagement before the invention of gunpowder, when ship fought with ship, and man with man. To this, in the present instance, must be added the darkness of a winter's night, in which friend was but ill distinguished from foe, and no doubt was often mistaken for such ; a sea at all times perilous from rapid currents and sunken rocks ; and a hurricane which now increased its dangers a myriad-fold. Morning at length rose upon the field of carnage, and amid the shattered hulks and floating corpses which shrouded the Sea of Marmora, each party could more easily discover vestiges of its own loss than of triumph over the enemy. Nineteen galleys were missing from the Genoese fleet ; of these, thirteen had been dashed upon the rocks, and six carried down the channel of the

A. D.
1351.A. D.
1352.

Bosphorus. Ten of the Arragonese, and fourteen of the Venetians, had been taken and destroyed. The first, especially, had fought most bravely, and much of their disaster was to be attributed to their unacquaintance with the intricacies of the coast. Eighteen hundred prisoners and two thousand slain was the loss of the confederates ; and the conquerors had purchased their doubtful victory at a scarcely less terrible sacrifice of life ; for we are assured that of the Genoese nobles alone seven hundred perished. But for the retreat of Pisani, the battle might, perhaps, have been esteemed drawn ; but his squadron was too much disabled to permit him to renew the combat, though the point was strongly urged by the admiral of the Catalans, Ponsio de Santa Paz. That brave officer escaped the slaughter of the battle but to encounter a more melancholy fate. Unable to survive his defeat, when deprived of all hope of retrieving it, he died within a few days, brokenhearted and despairing.

All Europe regretted this unnatural contest of the maritime republica. The holy see interposed its mediatorial offices, but in vain ; and a name far more reverenced by posterity than that either of the sixth Clement or the sixth Innocent, is transmitted to us in the list of those who endeavoured to re-establish peace. Petrarch, during a long residence at Padua, had occasionally visited the *Lagune*, and his imagination appears to have been profoundly impressed by the singularity and the beauty of Venice. With Andrea Dandolo, he formed an intimate union, and their mutual taste for literature soon ripened into close friendship. While the Venetians were renewing their preparations, he addressed a letter to the doge on the 17th of March 1351, depicting, in florid and rhetorical language, the miseries of war. He lamented forcibly the disunion of two cities planted by nature as the very eyes of Italy ; and he prophesied that Europe, by their contention, must lose her dominion of the seas. "Would to heaven," he exclaimed, "that your arms were turned against Damascus, Susa, or Memphis ! Why renew in Ausonia the bloody fraternal conflict of Thebes ?" Then enlarging upon the glory of Venice, he stated, with an obscurity which it were idle to attempt to dispel, that many years before her foundation as a city, he not only found her name, but that also of one of her doges, already rendered

illustrious. His indignation at the Barbarian alliances which each republic had contracted is forcibly expressed ; and he dwells feelingly upon the horror of all transalpine violations of Italy. To prevent the evils which he foresaw would result from perseverance in their career of headlong enmity, he figuratively threw himself at the feet of the chiefs of the two nations, and bedewed them with tears. "Cast away your weapons, embrace in friendship, unite your standards and your hearts. So shall both the ocean and the Euxine be opened to you. The Indian, the Briton, and the Ethiopian shall tremble before your arms ; and your ships shall navigate securely to Trebisond, to the Fortunate Islands, to the unknown Thule—yea, even to either Pole. Be but at peace between yourselves, and no fear can assail you from elsewhere." It was not likely that Dandolo would be much affected by this wordy interference. He replied, however, in good set terms, extolling the composition, but confuting the arguments of Petrarch. The utmost bitterness of hatred to the Genoese breathed through the remainder of his letter. They are not brothers, he says, but domestic enemies ; the most pestilent of all Nature's works. Earth, sea, all nations reject and detest them ; and it is no marvel that they are at perpetual enmity with others, when they are for ever torn by disunion among themselves.

The combatants, meantime, had recruited their strength, and thought only of mutual defiance. Grimaldi, the new Genoese admiral, commanded sixty galleys in the spring of 1353, and detached a squadron to insult Venice in her own gulf. This affront was speedily and bitterly revenged. The rendezvous of the allied fleets was fixed off Loيرة, in Sardinia ; and seventy vessels were prepared to re-establish the tarnished glory of Pisani. The Genoese were ill provided with intelligence ; and not being aware that the Catalans had effected a junction with their confederates, they thought to surprise Pisani at advantage. On doubling one of the capes of the bay of Cagliari, they were confirmed in their delusion, for the Venetian admiral, in order more surely to entice them to an engagement, in which he felt confident of superiority, had concealed a portion of his force, and remained with the rest at anchor. It was not till Grimaldi had advanced too far to be able to decline battle, that he discovered his error : and

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it was then seen that the enemy not only greatly outnumbered him, but that three of the Arragoneese vessels (*cocche*) were of much larger bulk than ordinary, and that the Venetian galleys, besides their full complement of mariners, were manned also with a formidable body of soldiers. Each line, to render itself more firm against the shock of its opponent, linked ship to ship, by lashing huge chains round their masts and carcasses, and a few skirmishers only were left disengaged at either extremity. The wind had hitherto been favourable to the Genoese, who gladly perceived that the huge Catalans of which they felt most dread, being unprovided with rowage, must remain idle and motionless spectators. But the gale changed suddenly, almost at the moment at which the hostile lines touched each other's sides ; and the giant galleys, slipping their cables and setting full sail, bore down upon the three outermost Genoese, sank them, and passed on to the next ships. Grimaldi made signals to that portion of his fleet not yet engaged to gain the open sea, and turn the Venetian line. The manœuvre was executed, but the combat was not renewed : whether from the insubordination of their men, or from hopelessness of success, the Genoese crowded all sail with the nineteen ships which had been freed, and returned to their harbour. The thirty which were deserted by them surrendered. Nearly five thousand prisoners fell into the hands of the conquerors ; and the 29th of August, the anniversary of her former victory at Caristo, might be remembered as one of the brightest days of glory in the naval annals of Venice, if it were not unhappily polluted by the indelible infamy attaching to the massacre of her captives.

The return of Grimaldi spread consternation through Genoa. Whether from anxiety to escape the public gaze, or from having outsailed the remainder of his squadron, the discomfited admiral entered the gulf with his own galley singly,

*nempe und nave, relictis
Post tergum sociis,*

and for a while this was supposed to be the only survivor of the combat. Disaster increased the virulence of the factions by which the republic was already convulsed ; and the populace, despairing of safety under the existing government, adopted the vulgar but perhaps natural belief, that

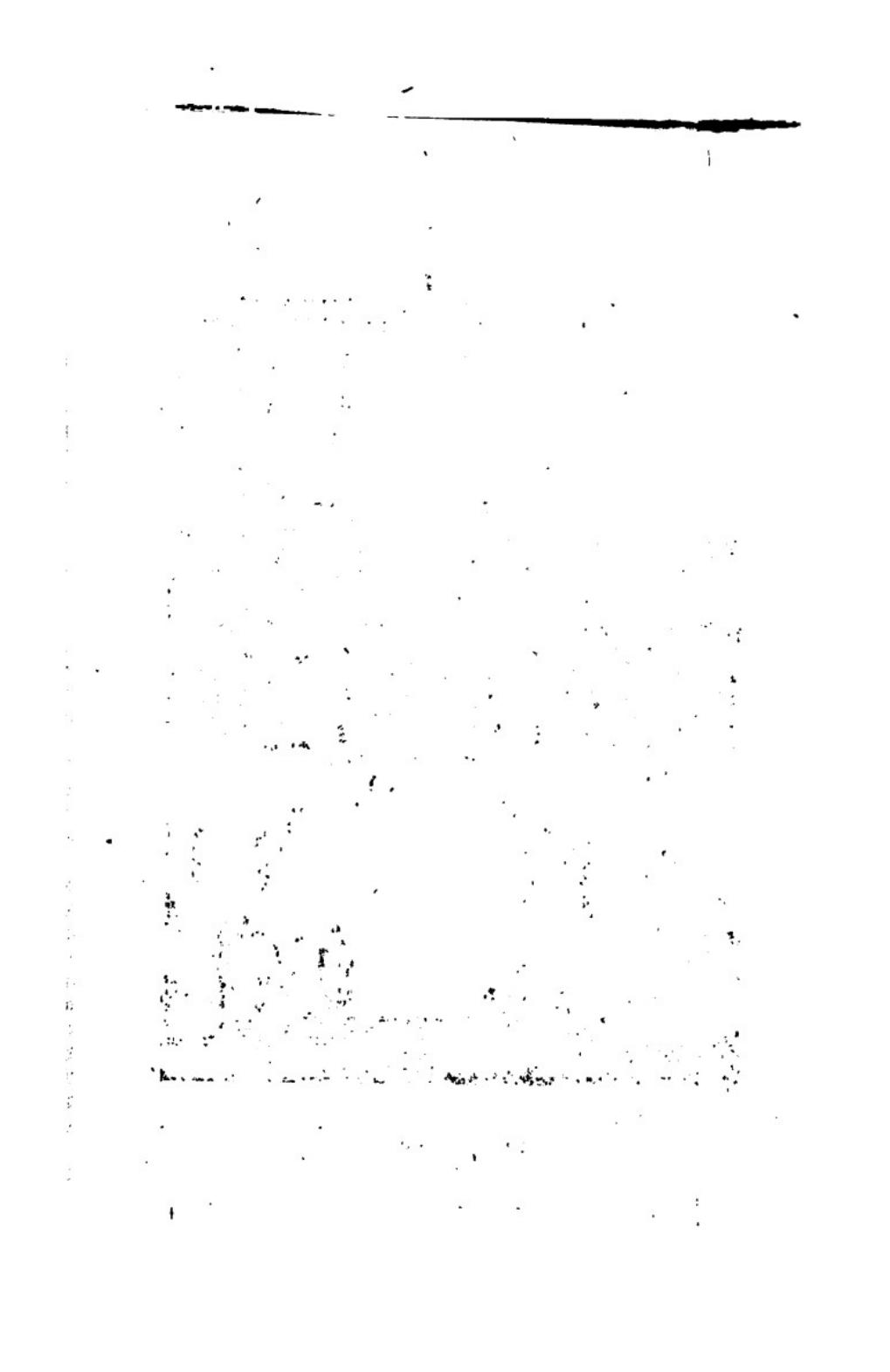
change of rulers must be accompanied by change of fortune also. Of the Lombard princes, no one at that time seemed to afford greater promise of protection than Giovanni Visconti, Archbishop of Milan. Already lord of sixteen powerful cities, he had recently annexed Bologna to his dominions by purchase ; and it was to him that the citizens of Genoa resorted on the deposition of their doge. Content to sacrifice liberty for the hope of revenge, they proffered their ready hands to his chains, and joyfully received the governor, whom he despatched with sixteen thousand men, to defend or to overawe them, as should first seem necessary. The Genoese thirsted once more to encounter their detested rivals ; and Visconti supplied them liberally with stores and money for the re-equipment of their fleet. He did not, however, plunge rashly into war; but, on the contrary, sought reconciliation with Venice. Petrarch again exerted himself to maintain peace, and this time in an official character. His patron, Visconti, appointed him especial ambassador to Venice, to negotiate peace between the republics ; or, if he failed in this main object, at least to stipulate for the neutrality of Milan ; but in neither attempt was he successful. Her recent triumphs had increased the bitterness with which Venice regarded her long-continued enemy ; she refused to treat with Genoa, and she denounced war against the archbishop. "My colleague," says Petrarch, in another letter to Dandolo, "harangued the council after I had finished. His martial tone of eloquence left nothing wanting ; but we were unable to open their closed ears, and to touch their hardened hearts. If Cicero himself had addressed them, he would have failed in his purpose." He concluded by urging the doge to look about him with his lynx eyes, and to weigh well the comparative produce of peace and war. Dandolo, in his answer, retorts Cicero upon his correspondent, and, having declined his advice, pressed him to continue writing for his recreation.*

Doria and Pisani were again to meet in arms, more eager to inflict injury than to avert it. The fleet of each left its native shores defenceless, while engaged in ravaging those of its enemy. Venice, of the two, was far the greater sufferer ; for her merchantmen were chased, and captured in

* *Variarum, Ep. 3, 4.*

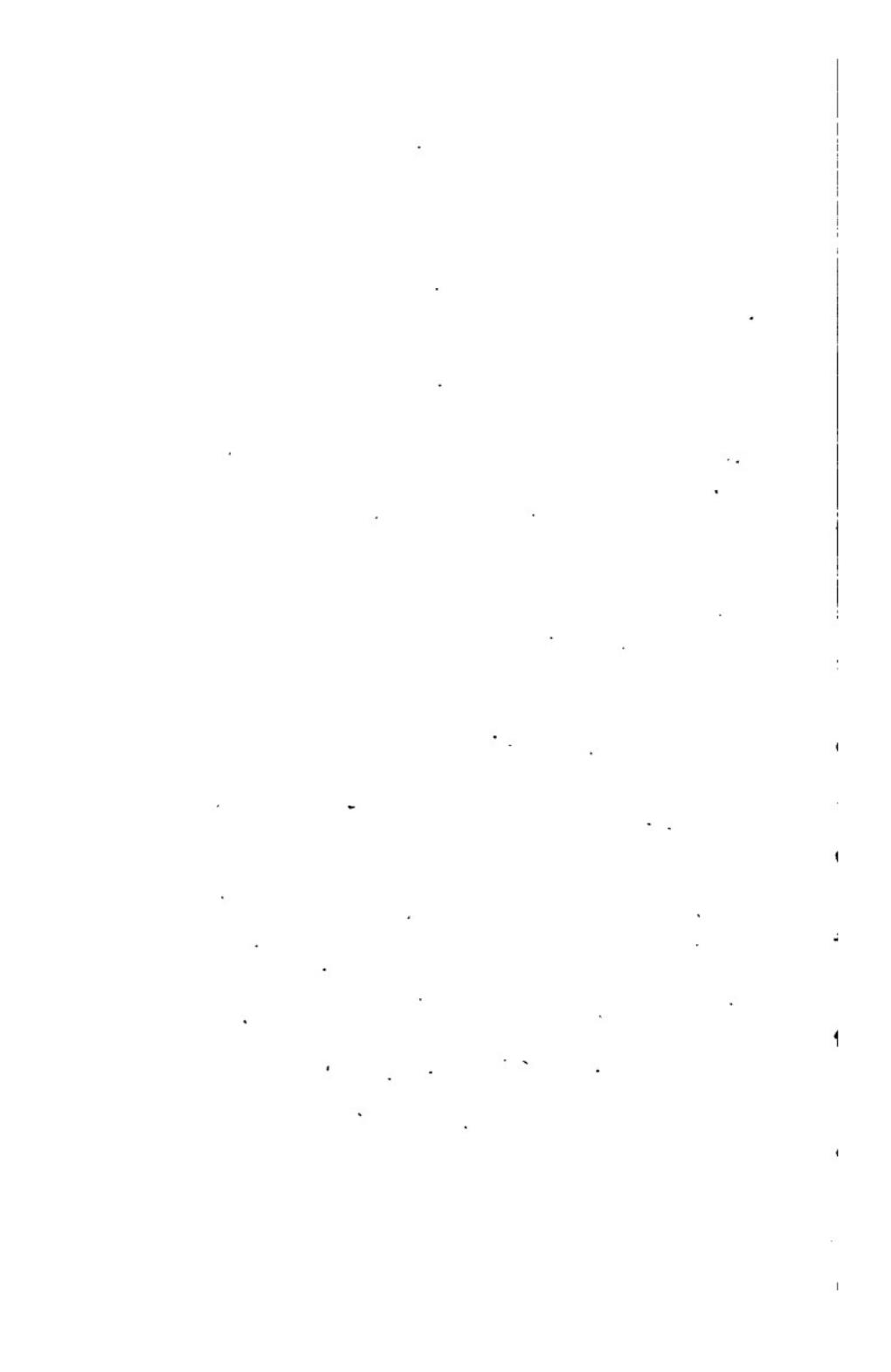
her very harbours ; Istria was laid waste, and Parenzo was reduced to ashes. The alarmed citizens prepared for the assault of their own banks ; the *aggere* was thronged with sentinels, and a ponderous chain was stretched between the two castles which now protect the entrance of the port at Lido. Pisani hastily obeyed a summons of recall ; but it had not been the intention of the Genoese admiral, nor was he indeed in sufficient force, to do more than to strike terror ; and before the return of the Venetian fleet he had quitted the Adriatic. Chagrined at this unexpected daring of the Genoese, and deeply mortified by the insult offered to his capital, the spirit of Dandolo sank under anxiety and shame. He died before the close of the year, and was interred, the last doge to whom that honour was permitted, in the cathedral of St. Mark.

A. D. 1354.
His successor was Marino Faliero, the conqueror of Zara ; and his reign, of so dark a celebrity in its close, was unfortunate at its very commencement. The hostile fleets sought each other ineffectually through the Archipelago ; and Pisani at length took up a station in the harbour of Sapienza, opposite Modon, to refresh his crew. Aware that his enemy was in the neighbourhood, he adopted wise precautions for security. One division of fifteen galleys, and twenty light armed *speronati*, under his vice-admiral Morosini, lay close to shore in the innermost part of the harbour, to victual and refit ; while the entrance of this deep bay seemed amply protected by the remainder of the fleet, presenting a formidable line of twenty galleys and six larger vessels, lashed together as before described in the battle of Cagliari. It was on the 3d of November that Doria hove in sight. His fleet consisted of five-and-thirty sail ; but though he was superior in numbers to the squadron at first opposed to him, the great strength of its position forbade attack. Every manœuvre by which he endeavoured to provoke the Venetians to quit their anchorage was unsuccessfully employed ; for Pisani would not fight at the pleasure of his enemy. At a moment when the enterprise was almost abandoned as fruitless, Giovanni Doria, a nephew of the admiral, perceived, like Nelson at Aboukir, that there was sufficient room for the passage of a ship between the shore and the enemy's line ; and gallantly leading his own division of thirteen galleys, he penetrated the bay.





THE GIANTS' STAIRS.
VENICE.



This manœuvre did not escape Pisani, who permitted its execution, thinking the daring youth, when placed between two divisions would be a certain prey. But Morosini's vessels were unprepared for an attack ; part of their crew was employed on shore, and the rest, surprised in idle security, made but a feeble resistance. Many threw themselves into the sea and gained the land ; many more were drowned in the attempt, and the whole of his ships were captured by the Genoese. The young Doria then returned upon Pisani, who thus found himself placed in the very situation to which he had calculated upon reducing his assailant. Pressed on both quarters, for he was equally engaged in front, and confused by two of his own vessels which had been fired and left to drift upon his line, after the loss of four thousand men, he at length surrendered. The stain of Cagliari was obliterated by this yet greater triumph, and Doria returned to Genoa, bearing with him thirty captured galleys, little short of six thousand prisoners, and among them one who was prized far above all, the redoubtable Pisani himself. What might have been the result if the victorious fleet had at once appeared before Venice cannot now be decided ; but never was there a moment in her history at which she appears to have been more defenceless. Forced loans might recruit the treasury, but the arsenal was unable to supply a single galley. Four private citizens (such names far more deserve remembrance than those which are inscribed in characters of blood), Marino Fradello, Beato Vido, Pietro Nani, and Constantino Zucholo, each armed a vessel at his own expense. But what would this scanty force have availed against the triumphant Doria ? Such was the natural impatience which the signory felt to renew negotiations with Visconti that a truce for four months was signed in little ^{A. D.} 1855. more than sixty days after the battle of Sapienza ; before it could be extended to a peace, Venice, more than enough endangered by foreign arms, encountered still greater peril from domestic treason.

The doge who now filled the throne had shown great military skill as commander at the siege of Zara ; and in some naval operations subsequently intrusted to him, he was again distinguished by taking Capo d'Istria. His family was one of the most noble and wealthy which the

republic boasted. Two of his ancestors had worn the ducal crown, and he himself bore the honourable title of Count di Valdemarino in the Marches of Treviso. After a long and laborious life, chiefly spent in the field, when nearly in his eightieth year, he still continued to serve his country as a diplomatist. He had been employed in this capacity at Genoa before the battle of Caristo, and he was filling the high duties of ambassador at Rome when his election to the chief magistracy was announced to him. Those who love to connect every more than ordinary event with a significant prognostic remarked, or remembered, that his public entrance, on the 5th of October, was beset with evil omens. So thick a mist (*caligo*, as the Venetians term their sea-fogs) overspread the *Lagune*, that it was found impossible to navigate the Bucentaur from San. Clemente, and the new doge, instead of appearing with the pomp fitted to his dignity, approached his capital in an humble gondola. Even the spot of his disembarkation was inauspicious; for in consequence of the haze his boatmen missed the *Riva della Paglia*, to which his course was directed, and landed at the *Piazzetta*, on the fatal scene of public executions, between the Two Columns. Whether the proverb, “*Guardati dall' intrecolunno*,” “Beware how you get between the Pillars,” existed before the time of Faliero, or arose in consequence of him, it may not be easy to decide; but Amelot de la Houssaye assures us that, from a recollection of his melancholy fate, no sum of money would tempt a Venetian nobleman to expose himself to the danger threatened by a committal of his person to this ill-omened passage.

The name of Marino Faliero is familiar to English ears; but the reader who borrows his conception of the Doge of Venice from the modern drama in our language which purports to relate his story, will wander as far from historic truth as from nature and probability. The *Chronicle of Sanuto*, which the poet has avowed to be his basis, presents no trace of that false, overwrought, and unintelligible passion which, in the tragedy, is palmed upon us for nice sensitiveness to injured honour. We are told, indeed, that the angry old man had once so far indulged his choleric humour as to fell to the ground a somewhat tardy bishop during the celebration of a holy solemnity. We hear of a

fiery temper, accustomed to command, elated by success, and in which, on the confession of Petrarch, who was personally well-informed regarding it, valour predominated over prudence. These are the unsettled elements upon which the tempter best loves to work ; but the insanity and extravagance with which we must charge Faliero, if we suppose his attempt to overthrow the government of which he was chief arose solely from an outrageous desire of revenge for a petty insult, are entirely gratuitous and belong altogether to the poet. Madness of another kind, however, that of ambition, is clearly ascribable to him ; and if we take this as our key, much of the obscurity attendant upon a catastrophe which has been imperfectly and inadequately developed will be cleared away ; we shall obtain a character little indeed awakening our sympathy, but yet not wholly at variance with our judgment ; and although we may be astonished at, and recoil from the motives which prompted his crime, they will not be altogether of a class which sets our comprehension at defiance.*

No one can have traced our preceding course of history without having remarked the gradual encroachments of the oligarchy on the ducal power. At almost every new election it was crippled and curtailed afresh of some remaining portion of authority, till the chief magistrate, to whom attached the heaviest odium of tyranny, was at the same time in his own person the victim whom that tyranny most grievously oppressed. During the interregnum which occurred before the nomination of Faliero, new inroads had been made upon the few privileges still uncircumscribed. Additional shackles were imposed upon his communications with foreign states, by an increase of the numbers of that council, without the presence of which he was forbidden to open despatches or to receive ambassadors ; and the three presidents of the XL. were annexed to their prince as spies. Besides this he was subjected to fresh control in the delivery of his votes, in the disposal of his property, and in the collection of his revenue. Such unexpected mutilation of a power already lowered far beneath that standard at

* Lord Byron's conception of Faliero's character and motives appears to us to be mistaken ; but what is to be said to the countless imperfections and engraftments upon history which M. de la Vigne has introduced into his French play on the same subject ?

which an ambitious or even a liberal spirit would estimate nominal sovereignty as worthy of acceptance, must have imbibited the very opening of Faliero's reign. Nor were the burdensome forms to which in his administration he was daily compelled to submit calculated to increase his attachment to existing ordinances. Fettered by absurd ceremonies, a prisoner in his own palace, thwarted, suspected, overruled, vigilantly watched, studiously degraded, a high-toned and independent temper must have felt such bonds to be galling—a proud and irritable one must have passionately longed to burst them.*

To Faliero there was yet another source of discontent. In advanced life, he had married a young and lovely woman. No breath of scandal tarnished her reputation;† but yet it is likely that he must have been keenly alive to the possibility of ridicule; that the disparity of years must frequently have crossed his mind, as affording room for suspicion in the breasts of other men; and that, however assured he might be of the safety of his own honour, he must have known there were many to whom such assurance might be wanting. Thus estimating his feelings, which are not here imagined for our purpose, but which, from the constitution of human nature, could not but exist, we shall have little difficulty in conceiving that the unimportant circumstance which we are about to relate, though it can by no means be said to have been the *cause* of Faliero's rashness, overthrew, perhaps, the last remaining barrier by which his impatient fury was restrained.

The rest we shall borrow freely from Sanuto. At a banquet which it was customary for the doge to celebrate in his palace, after the bull-hunt, on the Carnival Thursday, a

* This statement is plainly borne out by Marco Villani. *Havendo l'animo grande si contentava male, non parendogli potere fare a sua volontà come havrebbe voluto; strignendogli la loro antica legge di non potere passare la deliberazione del Consiglio a lui diputato per lo Comune. E però havea preso sdegno contra a gentili huomini che più lo repugnavano presuntuosamente.* (V. 13). Villani differs in many particulars from Sanuto. He omits all mention both of Steno and Beltramo; and he attributes the failure of the conspiracy entirely to the vacillation of the doge. P. Justiniani (lib. iv. p. 85) concurs in our representation of Faliero's ambition, and, indeed, represents the doge as making the first overture to Israëlio, instead of receiving it from him.

† Doglioni, v. p. 226, perhaps, appears to throw out imputations against her.

squabble had arisen from some too pressing familiarity offered by one of the young gallants of the court to his mistress. Michele Steno, a gentleman of poor estate, was enamoured of a lady in attendance upon the dogaressa ; and presuming upon her favour, he was guilty of some freedom which led the doge to order his exclusion. This command appears to have been executed with more than necessary violence ; and the youth, fired by the indignity which disgraced him in the eyes of his mistress, sought revenge by assailing Faliero in that point in which he conceived him to be most vulnerable. He wrote on the doge's chair in the council chamber a few words reflecting upon the dogaressa. "Marino Faliero, husband of the lovely wife ; he keeps, but others kiss her."* The offence was traced to its author ; it was pitiful and unmanly ; yet it scarcely deserved heavier punishment than that which the XL. adjudged to it ; namely, that Steno should be imprisoned for two months, and afterward banished from the state for a year. But to the morbid and excited spirit of Faliero the petty affront of this rash youth appeared heightened to a state-crime ; and the lenient sentence with which his treason (for so he considered it) had been visited was an aggravation of every former indignity offered to the chief magistrate by the oligarchy which affected to control him. Steno, he said, should have been ignominiously hanged, or at least condemned to perpetual exile.

On the day after the sentence, while the doge was yet hot in indignation, an event occurred which seems to have confirmed the chronicler whose steps we are following, in his belief in the doctrine of necessity. "Now it was fated," he tells us, "that my Lord Duke Marino was to have his head cut off. And as it is necessary, when any effect is to be brought about, that the cause of that effect must happen, it therefore came to pass,"—that Bertuccio Israello, admiral of the arsenal,† a person apparently of no less impetuous

* "*Marin Falieri, dalla bella moglie, altri la gode, ed egli la montiene.*"

† This officer was chief of the artisans of the arsenal, and commanded the Bucentaur, for the safety of which, even if an accidental storm should arise, he was responsible with his life. He mounted guard at the ducal palace during an interregnum, and bore the red standard before the new doge on his inauguration ; for which service his perquisites were the ducal mantle, and the two silver basins from which the doge scattered the regulated pittance which he was permitted to throw among the people.—*Amelot de la Houssaye*, 79.

passions than the doge himself, and who is described as possessed also of egregious cunning, approached him to seek reparation for an outrage. A noble had dishonoured him by a blow; and it was vain to ask redress for this affront from any but the highest personage in the state. Faliero, brooding over his own imagined wrongs, disclaimed that title, and gladly seized occasion to descant on his personal insignificance. "What wouldest thou have me to do for thee?" was his answer: "Think upon the shameful gibe which hath been written concerning me, and think on the manner in which they have punished that ribald, Michele Steno, who wrote it; and see how the Council of XL. respect our person!" Upon this, the admiral returned, "My lord duke, if you would wish to make yourself a prince, and cut all those cuckoldy gentlemen to pieces, I have the heart, if you do but help me, to make you prince of all the state; and then you may punish them all." Hearing this, the duke said, "How can such a matter be brought about?" and so they discoursed thereon.

Such is Sanuto's brief narrative of the origin of this conspiracy; and we have nothing more certain to offer. It is not easy to say whence he obtained his intelligence. If such a conversation as that which he relates really did occur, it must have taken place without the presence of witnesses, and therefore could be disclosed only by one of the parties. It is far more likely that the chronicler is relating that which he *supposed*, than that which he *knew*; and as it must be admitted that the interview with the admiral of the arsenal occurred, and that, immediately after it, the doge was found linked with the daring band of which that officer was chief, there is no violation of probability in granting that some such conversation took place; and that the train was ignited by this collision of two angry spirits. Whether the plot was in any degree organized beforehand, or arose at the moment, it is manifestly impossible for us to decide, without information which cannot now be obtained.

Bertucci Faliero, a nephew of the doge, and Filippo Calendaro, a seaman of great repute, were summoned to conference immediately. It was agreed to communicate the design to six other associates; and during many nights successively these plebeian assassins arranged with the doge, under the roof of his own palace, the massacre of

the entire aristocracy, and the dissolution of the existing government. "It was concerted that sixteen or seventeen leaders should be stationed in various parts of the city, each being at the head of forty men, armed and prepared ; but the followers were not to know their destination. On the appointed day, they were to make affrays among themselves here and there, in order that the duke might have a pretence for tolling the bells of San Marco, which are never rung but by the order of the duke.* And at the sound of the bells these sixteen or seventeen, with their followers, were to come to San Marco, through the streets which open upon the piazza ; and when the nobles and leading citizens should come to the piazza to know the cause of the riot, then the conspirators were to cut them in pieces ; and this work being finished, my Lord Marino Faliero, the duke, was to be proclaimed Lord of Venice.† Things having been thus settled, they agreed to fulfil their attempt on Wednesday, the 15th day of April, in the year 1355. So covertly did they plot, that no one ever dreamed of their machinations."

As a previous step, in order to arouse popular feeling against the great council, it was determined to practise a singular stratagem. Parties of the conspirators paraded different quarters of the capital in the dead of night, and having stopped at the windows of some citizens of the middle and lower classes, and there insulted the women of the family by scandalous and unseemly propositions, they retired with rude bursts of laughter, calling each other loudly by the names of the principal noblemen.‡

Perhaps the rapidity with which their design was framed tended much to its concealment. Scarcely a little month had elapsed since its first projection, and now the following day was to destroy the constitution of Venice, to deluge her streets with patrician blood, and to pluck up all her ancient stocks from their very roots, without a suspicion of the approaching calamity having glanced across the intended victims. Either the Council of Ten could not yet have attained its subsequent fearful and extraordinary ubiquity, or the conspirators must have exhibited a prudence and self-con-

* One of the pretexts for ringing this alarm was to have been an announcement of the appearance of a Genoese fleet off the *Lagune*.

† *Demum Falerius non princeps amplius sed Dominus salutareatur*, P. Justiniani, *ut sup.* p 86.

‡ P. Justiniani, *ut sup.*

trol rarely, if ever, paralleled by an equally large body of men engaged in a similar attempt. To their minor agents, their ultimate design had not been revealed; and even in the end the discovery arose not from treachery, nor from incaution, but from "a compunctionous visiting" of one framed of stuff less stern than his associates, and who shrank from the murder of a benefactor. The part played by Tresham in that yet more bloody conspiracy which the papists, in after-days, framed against the three estates of England, was but a repetition of that now enacted in Venice by Beltramo of Bergamo.* Beltramo had been brought up in a noble family, to which he was closely attached, that of Nicolo Lioni, of San Stefano; and anxious to preserve his patron's life, he went to him on the evening before the rising, and entreated him to remain at home on the morrow. The singular nature of the request excited surprise, which was increased to suspicion by the ambiguous answers returned to further inquiries which it suggested. By degrees, every particular of the treason was revealed, and Lioni heard of the impending danger with terror, and of the hands by which it was threatened with astonishment and slowly-accorded belief. Not a moment was to be lost; he secured Beltramo, therefore, and having communicated with a few friends, they resolved upon assembling the heads of the different magistracies, and immediately seizing such ringleaders as had been denounced. These were taken at their own houses without resistance. Precautions were adopted against any tumultuous gathering of the mechanics of the arsenal, and strict orders were issued to the keeper of the *campanile* not on any account to toll the bells.

In the course to be pursued with the lesser malefactors no difficulty was likely to arise: the rack and the gibbet were their legal portion. But for the doge, the law afforded no precedent; and upon a crime which it had not entered into the mind of man to conceive (as with that nation which, having never contemplated parricide, had neglected to provide any punishment for it), no tribunal known to the constitution was competent to pass judgment. The Council of

* Such appears to be the most received belief. Sismondi has preferred another, which represents Beltramo to have been one of those persons from whom the particulars of the conspiracy had been concealed, but who had been persuaded to attend the musters: his suspicions were excited, and these he stated to Lioni.

Ten demanded the assistance of a *giunta* of twenty nobles, who were to give advice, but not to ballot ; and this body having been constituted, "they sent for my Lord Marino Faliero, the duke, and my lord was then consorting in the palace with people of great estate, gentlemen and other good men, none of whom knew yet how the fact stood."

The ringleaders were immediately hanged between the Red Columns on the *Piazzetta*, some singly, some in couples ; and the two chiefs of them, Bertuccio Israello and Calendaro, with a cruel precaution not uncommon in Venice, were previously gagged. Nor was the process of the highest delinquent long protracted. He appears neither to have denied nor to have extenuated his guilt, and "on Friday, the 16th day of April, judgment was given in the Council of Ten, that my Lord Marino Faliero, the duke, should have his head cut off, and that the execution should be done on the landing-place of the stone staircase, the Giants' Stairs, where the doges take their oath when they first enter the palace. On the following day, the doors of the palace being shut, the duke had his head cut off, about the hour of noon ; and the cap of estate was taken from the duke's head, before he came down the staircase. When the execution was over, it is said that one of the chiefs of the Council of Ten went to the columns of the palace against the piazza, and displaying the bloody sword, exclaimed, 'Justice has fallen on the traitor !' and the gates being then opened, the populace eagerly rushed in to see the doge who had been executed."

The body of Faliero was conveyed by torchlight in a gondola, and unattended by the customary ceremonies, to the church of San Giovanni and San Paolo ; in the outer wall of which a stone coffin is still imbedded, with an illegible inscription, which once presented the words, *Hic jacet Marinus Feletro Dux.* His lands and goods were confiscated to the state, with the exception of two thousand ducats, of which he was permitted to dispose ; and yet further to transmit to posterity the memory of his enormous crime, his portrait was not admitted to range with those of his brother doges in the hall of the great council. In the frame which it ought to occupy is suspended a black veil, inscribed with the words, *Hic est locus Marini Feletro decapitati pro criminibus.*

The fate of Beltramo deserves a few words. He was amply rewarded for his opportune discovery, by a pension of a thousand ducats in perpetuity, the grant of a private

residence which had belonged to Faliero, and inscription in the golden book. Dissatisfied, however, with this lavish payment for a very ambiguous virtue, he lost no occasion of taxing the nobles with neglect of his services, and of uttering loud calumnies against them, both secretly and in public. The government, wearied by his importunities and ingratitude, at length deprived him of his appointments, and sentenced him to ten years' exile at Ragusa ; but his restless and turbulent spirit soon prompted him to seek a spot less under the control of the signory, in which he might vent his railings afresh, and with impunity. It is probable that the long arm of the Council of X. arrested his design, for we are significantly informed that he *perished* on his way to Pannonia.



Ancient Doge and Dogaresca.
From TITIAN.

CHAPTER VII.

FROM A. D. 1355 TO A. D. 1878.

War with Louis of Hungary—Loss of Dalmatia—Bequest of Petrarch's Library—Insurrection in Candia—Petrarch's Account of the Festivities on its Suppression—Last Struggle of the Candiates—Intrigues of Francesco Vecchio da Carrara—Invasion of Padua—Submission of da Carrara—Revolution at Constantinople—Youth of Carlo Zeno—Acquisition of Tenedos—Affray in Cyprus—Powerful League against Venice.

DOGES.

| A. D. | | |
|-------|--------|--------------------|
| 1355. | LVIII. | GOVANNI GRADENIGO. |
| 1356. | LIX. | GOVANNI DELFINO. |
| 1361. | LX. | LORENZO CELEI. |
| 1365. | LXI. | MARCO CORNARO. |
| 1367. | LXII. | ANDREA CONTARINI. |

GOVANNI GRADENIGO succeeded to the blood-stained throne: both his reign and that of Giovanni Delpino were passed in a calamitous war with Louis of Hungary, who still regarded Zara with a longing eye. Seven revolts of that colony had sufficiently evinced her disaffection from Venice; and to her Hungarian neighbours, on the other hand, she was attached by the strong ties of similar language, manners, and origin. Louis allied himself with the Duke of Austria, with the Patriarch of Aquileia, and with one whom gratitude for the restoration of his family to power ought to have retained in the friendship of the republic, Francesco da Carrara (Francesco Vecchio, as he is termed, in order to distinguish him from his ill-fated son), a descendant of Marsilio, and the present Lord of Padua. Thus supported, he pressed a vigorous and successful war both in the Trevisano and in Dalmatia; and in the end he compelled Venice to the renouncement of all pretension to sovereignty on the eastern coast of the Adriatic.

To the reign of Delpino are attributed the sumptuary

laws which regulated the dress, table, and personal expenses of each rank of citizens, and the institution of the three magistrates by whom they are superintended. A. D. 1358. One of the absurd restrictions which they introduced regarded uniformity of dress among all classes. The cloak of the richest noble, as well as that of the meanest artisan, if he could procure one, was to be made of Paduan cloth, and a heavy penalty was imposed upon the use of English, Spanish, or Dutch manufacture. The younger nobility evaded this law by the magnificence of their under vestments. The cloak was made so as to exhibit these to advantage, by falling open, and on entering their gondolas or their own houses, it was entirely thrown aside. Then they appeared dressed in rich flowered silks, edged with the costliest lace, and often with a doublet of gold or silver brocade. About the time of Delpino also, that decree is supposed to have been passed which forbids any Venetian noble from embarking in commercial pursuits; a law not always rigidly observed at later periods. Its direct tendency was to prevent the accumulation of wealth in new hands, and thus to preserve the ascendancy of those families by whom power had already been attained.

The commencement of the reign of Lorenzo Celsi, who succeeded, was distinguished by a magnificent bequest from Petrarch, of which the Venetians have A. D. 1361. proved themselves but little worthy. The poet appears to have contemplated his visits to the *Lagune* with no ordinary satisfaction, and in order more substantially to testify his grateful sense of the frequent hospitality of the republic, he offered his library as a legacy. In 1362, while the plague was raging at Padua, he had fixed his abode at Venice, which was free from infection; his books accompanied him, and for their conveyance he was obliged to retain a numerous and expensive stud of baggage-horses. On the 4th of September in that year, he wrote to the senate, "I wish, with the good-will of our Saviour and of the Evangelist himself, to make St. Mark heir of my library." His chief stipulations were, that the books should neither be sold nor dispersed, and that a building should be provided in which they might be secure against fire and the weather. The great council gladly accepted this liberal donation, and addressed its thanks in terms of courtesy (perhaps not exag-

gerated, if we remember the times in which they were written) "to a scholar unrivalled in poetry, in moral philosophy, and in theology." A palace which belonged to the family of Molina, and in later years was converted into a monastery for the nuns of St. Sepulchre, was assigned as a residence for the poet, and as a depository for his books. Macedo, a professor of Padua, who has described the wonders of Venice most inflatedly, in what he terms a *Series of pictures designed by a poetical and historical pencil*, speaks of Petrarch on this occasion as crossing the *Lagune* like another Arion; and by the melody of his song renewing Amphion's miracle, and rousing the stones to create a library. This collection, which formed the nucleus of the now inestimable library of St. Mark, though by no means extensive, still contained many treasures of no small price. Among them are enumerated a MS. of Homer, given to Petrarch by Nicolaus Sigeros, ambassador of the Greek emperor; a beautiful copy of Sophocles; the entire Iliad and great part of the Odyssey translated by Leontio Pilato, and copied in the handwriting of Boccaccio, whom the translator had instructed in Greek; an imperfect Quintilian; and most of the works of Cicero transcribed by Petrarch himself, who professed most unbounded admiration for the great Roman philosopher.* The Venetians, to their shame, grievously neglected the poet's gift. When Tomasini requested permission to inspect the books, in the early part of the seventeenth century, he was led to the roof of St. Mark's, where he found them, to use his own words, "partly reduced to dust, partly petrified"—*dictu mirum! in saza mutatos*;† and he adds a catalogue of such as were afterward rescued from destruction. About a century after the establishment of this first public library in Venice, it was largely increased by the munificence of Cardinal Bessarion, who, as patriarch of Constantinople, possessed frequent opportunities of securing MSS. of great rarity; and afterward by that of Professor Melchior Wieland, a native of Marienburg, who, out of gratitude for benefits conferred by the republic, bequeathed it his collection in 1809. It now contains about sixty thousand volumes, which, in 1812, were transferred from the *Procuratie nuove* to the splendid saloon in the ducal

* Ginguené, *Hist. Littér. d'Italie*, ch. vii. p. 2.

† *Petrarcha Editiores*, p. 78.

palace, no longer required for the assemblies of the grand council.

The private tastes of the doge Celsi are noticed by an anonymous manuscript chronicle ;* and one of them was uncommon for a Venetian. He was fond of inspecting the processes of the mint, and he kept a large stud of horses in the capital. His accession occasioned a singular domestic jealousy. His father, accustomed to the exercise of paternal authority, felt reluctant to acknowledge the elevation which his son had attained above himself; and the churlish old man, unable to brook a superiority which he considered to be a violation of the course of nature, in order to avoid uncovering himself in the presence of the doge, adopted a habit of going always bareheaded. Lorenzo, actuated by a better feeling, ingeniously devised a pretext which might at once relieve his father's ridiculous scruple, and obtain for himself the honour due to his station. He embroidered a cross upon the ducal cap, and the superstitious dotard no longer refused the customary mark of respect. "It is not," he said, "to you, my son, that I bow, but to the cross. Having given you life, it is not possible that I should be your inferior." The conduct of the doge was wise and affectionate; but how far more touching was the unextorted filial piety which Roper has so simply and so beautifully recorded of Sir Thomas More, when filling the exalted post of lord chancellor. "Whosoever he passed through Westminster Hall to his place in the Chancery, by the court of the King's Bench, if his father (one of the judges thereof) had been seated or he came, he would go into the same court, and there, reverently kneeling down in the sight of them all, duly ask his father's blessing; and if it fortuned that his father and he, at pleadings in Lincoln's-Inn, met together (as they sometimes did), notwithstanding his high office, he would offer in argument the pre-eminence to his father, though he for his office sake, would refuse to take it."

The cession of Dalmatia had naturally impressed the other colonies of Venice with a conviction of her feebleness; and the Candiates, always chafing under her yoke, once again endeavoured to throw it off. This insurrection was

* *Bib. di San Marco*, xxi.

not planned and conducted, as in former instances, by the discontented natives : it was now a revolt of the whole Venetian population of the island. Of the original settlers many were branches of the most illustrious families of the mother-country, who painfully felt their hopeless exclusion from all share in the government ; and their irritation was heightened by an idle and unseasonable sarcasm. One of their demands had been, that they might be permitted to depute twenty sages to the great council, as their representatives and guardians of their interests ; and this not unreasonable proposition had been met by the governor, to whom it was submitted, by the bitter inquiry, "Are there any sages among you ?" A tax levied for the reparation of their port afforded a pretext for resistance, and the islanders rose almost to a man ; they seized the arsenals and public stores, secured the person of the governor, threw open the jails, and armed the prisoners ; and in order more effectually to sever all ties which might bind them to Venice, with a headlong fury they abandoned their national profession of faith, and embraced the doctrine of the Greek church. St. Mark at the same time was degraded from his tutelary pre-eminence, and replaced by a far less distinguished patron, St. Titus.

Whether from weakness or from a wish to prevent effusion of blood, the republic adopted a course little likely to avail with a refractory colony already in arms. She sought to negotiate ; but the envoys were not permitted to land, and they were sent back with an insulting message to the signory. A second embassy was allowed to disembark ; but it was only that it might witness the fierce enthusiasm of the populace and their detestation of the Venetian name. At length, after much delay and many precautions, a fleet of thirty-three galleys was equipped ; and six thousand men, embarked in them, were intrusted to the command of Luchino dal Verme, a Veronese. The Genoese had refused their assistance to the insurgents : and after all the bold demonstrations of resistance which the Candiotes had exhibited, this inconsiderable armament was sufficient to reduce the island of one hundred cities in the short term ^{A. D.} of three days. The scaffold received its customary 1364. tribute after an unsuccessful revolt ; and the triumph was celebrated at Venice with unusual festivity, of which

Petrarch in one of his letters has afforded the following very minute and picturesque narrative.

It was on the 4th of June that the poet, in company with the Archbishop of Patras was enjoying a delicious prospect of the sea from his windows, and cheating a summer evening with familiar talk, when the conversation was interrupted by the appearance of a galley, in the offing, fancifully dressed out with green boughs. This unusual decoration, the rapid motion of the oars, the joyful shouts of the mariners, the garlands which they had twined round their caps, the streamers which floated from their masts, all betokened the arrival of some pleasing intelligence. A signal was given from the beacon-tower of the port, and the whole population of the city flocked to the water's edge, breathless with curiosity, to ascertain the news. As the bark came nearer shore, some flags of the enemy were seen hanging from her stern ; and all doubt was then removed that she was the messenger of victory. What, however, was the general surprise and joy when it was announced that the rebels were not only worsted but conquered, that Candia was subdued, and that the war was at an end ! The doge with his court and prelates and the whole attendant crowd of citizens immediately repaired to St. Mark's, and offered up a solemn service of thanksgiving. The festivals which succeeded lasted for many days ; and they were closed by a tournament and a magnificent equestrian parade, for which Petrarch is unable to find an adequate Latin name.

In this last spectacle a troop of four-and-twenty noble Venetian youths, headed by a Ferrarese, splendidly arrayed, and mounted on horses gorgeously caparisoned, started singly, but in quick succession, from a barrier in the *Piazza di San Marco*, and, coursing round to a goal, uninterruptedly renewed the same circle, brandishing lances from which silken ribands fluttered to the wind. The doge with his brilliant train sat in the marble gallery over St. Mark's porch, by the well-known horses, whence the evening sun was shaded by richly embroidered canopies. On his right hand sat Petrarch himself, whose love of pleasure was satisfied by two days' attendance on the protracted festivity. The splendour of the scene was heightened by the presence of several English barons, some of them of the royal blood, who at that time were in Venice, so far as we can under-

stand Petrarch's obscure statement, engaged in some maritime negotiation ;* though one of the chroniclers assures us that they had no other object than a laudable desire of seeing the world.† In the court below not a grain of sand could have fallen to the pavement, so dense was the throng. A wooden scaffolding, raised for the occasion on the right of the piazza, contained a bright store of beauty ; the forty noblest dames of Venice glittering with costly jewels. In the horse-course honour was the sole prize ; but for the tournament, in which danger was to be encountered, more substantial rewards were proposed. For the most successful champion a crown of solid gold, chased with precious stones ; for the second, a silver belt of choice workmanship. The King of Cyprus, who happened to be returning to his dominions from France, condescended to break a lance with the son of the victorious general, Luchino dal Verme ; but the chief honour of the three days' jousts was borne away, as was to be wished, by a native Venetian, though the flower of all the neighbouring provinces had been invited to partake in these feats of arms.‡

The following year beheld the last fruitless struggle of the Candiotes for their liberty ; and although it occurred in a different reign, we shall briefly notice it here, in order that we may preserve the thread of our narrative unbroken. The insurgents, recovered from their late disasters, were headed by three brothers of the family of Calenge ; and they protracted during more than twelve months a desultory, tedious, and destructive war of posts, by distributing their followers in straggling parties throughout the island, instead of taking the field in a single body. They were at length hunted down ; and so bloody was the revenge of the Venetians, that neither sex nor age was spared, if contaminated by the unhappy name of Calenge. "Candia," says one of the *provveditori*, in his report to the government which employed him, "is yours for ever ; another rebellion is impos-

* Petrarch's words are, *Britones qui sese interim laborari (labori !) aquoreo vegetabant.*

† Moreolini, xiii. p. 288.

‡ *Sensilia*, iv. 2. Mr. Rogers, following almost the very letter of Petrarch's narrative, has transferred it with no common happiness into very elegant verse. (*Italy, St. Mark's Place.*) It is needless to cite the passage at length from a poem which is in everybody's memory.

sible ; terrible examples have swept away the ringleaders ; the fortresses which gave them asylums, the cities of Lasitha and Anapolis, every building which might afford a stronghold has been razed to the ground. The inhabitants have been transported to other districts ; the surrounding neighbourhood has been converted into a desert ; and, henceforward, no one, on pain of death, will be permitted to cultivate, or even to approach it."

When Andrea Contarini was named to the dogeship, A. D. 1367. and was about to commence a reign more memorable than any other in the annals of Venice, it was not without manifest reluctance that he submitted to the choice of the electors. So sincerely, indeed, did he wish to escape the fetters of nominal sovereignty, that he withdrew to Padua ; nor did he return for investiture, till the senate threatened confiscation and other punishments of rebellion, if he should continue disobedient to their wishes. The *correttori* had already passed a law during the interregnum, by which such a refusal was forbidden, without the previous assent of the counsellors of the doge-elect ; and even if this were obtained, it was afterward necessary that their decision should be approved by two-thirds of the grand council. Contarini, unable to oppose these statutes, was at length compelled to exchange the honourable repose of private life for the splendid slavery of the Venetian throne. It is said that his reluctance arose in great measure from the remembrance of a prediction which had been made to him some years before, by a dervis in Syria, in which he was forewarned that heavy calamities would befall his country if ever he accepted her sovereignty. But there is little occasion to invent supernatural causes for conduct which may be readily explained on very obvious motives. Fresh restraints had been recently imposed upon the doge ; and the petty regulations framed for his household, and for the control even of his personal habits, must in themselves have sufficed to revolt a generous spirit. As if the senate distrusted the honesty of their sovereign in money transactions, the *avvogadri* were instructed to watch that the bills of the dueal establishment were discharged monthly ; and if there should be any arrear in them, they were to keep back from the revenue enough for their payment. No repair could be undertaken in the palace at the public cost

without the consent of two-thirds of the grand council, and a sumptuary regulation fixed the sum allotted for the entertainment of strangers of note on a scale of very mean economy. Neither the doge nor any of his family was permitted to receive any present, or to hold any fief, estate, or immoveable property without the narrow limits of the *Dogado*,* and those who already possessed such were compelled to sell it. Lastly,—it is with shame and astonishment that we write it,—an especial provision was made, that the doge should furnish himself with not less than one robe of cloth of gold within six months after his election. The prying insolence of this tyranny over the individual was felt, perhaps, more acutely than even the additional political bondage by which it was thought fitting to diminish his shadow of authority, when it was enacted that in the councils the opinion of the doge must always coincide with that of the *avvogadori*; because, by the very nature of their posts, those officers, it was said, were bound to vote for the interests of the republic.

The new reign was early involved in trouble. Francesco da Carrara had never forgiven an invasion of his territory, which, during the late Hungarian war, he had provoked by faithlessness and ingratitude. By continued petty encroachments on the frontiers of the republic, he roused angry remonstrances; and but for the mediation of the A. D. King of Hungary, he would have been again involved 1370. in war. A truce for two years was concluded, and this period was treacherously employed by Carrara in establishing a secret influence in the very heart of the Venetian councils. Through the artifices of Bartolomeo, a monk of St. Jerome, he won over to his views some of the highest officers of the government; and two presidents of the XL., an *avvogadore*, and a privy counsellor of the doge basely sold themselves to betray the secrets of their country. His partial success encouraged Carrara in designs of yet blacker character; and although it is not possible to speak with accuracy of the extent of the conspiracy which he organized, there can be little doubt that the lives of the chief

* The *Dogado* comprised no more than the city of Venice, the Isles of Malamocco, Chioggia, and Brondolo, and the narrow slip of coast between the mouths of the Adige and the Musone.

Venetian nobles were, in the first instance, to be sacrificed. For this purpose, troops of bravoes, wretches too well known in Italian history, were introduced, from time to time, into the city. They were chiefly distributed in the quarter adjoining St. Mark's; and their meetings were held in an obscure house, kept by a woman named Gobba, whose son was employed in making the assassins familiarly acquainted with the persons of their intended victims. The vigilance of the Council of Ten detected this atrocious union. The woman Gobba claimed merit for revelations which she was unable to avoid, and her life was spared on the condition of ten years' imprisonment. Her son and some Venetians of mean condition were hanged. The minor conspirators, after confession had been wrung from them by torture, were dragged through the streets and torn asunder by wild horses. The monk Bartolomeo and two of the nobles whom he had seduced were condemned to secret execution in their dungeons; and the milder sentence of the two other patricians, who were less guilty, or more powerful, was a year's imprisonment and perpetual exclusion from the councils. A crime of yet more heinous nature than that of limited assassination was charged upon Carrara and his agents. It was said that he intended to poison the reservoirs from which Venice derives her supplies of water; and thus to involve the whole city in destruction at a single blow. Whatever might be the foundation for this report, it was well calculated to sustain popular hatred against Carrara; and the signory encouraged the belief by placing sentinels over the public cisterns. The open punishment of the chief offender himself was, at the moment, beyond the power of Venice; but there is too much reason to believe that she did not scruple to retort his own weapons of treachery. Francesco da Carrara had many enemies; and among them few more bitter than his brother Marsilio. The latter was invited to Venice; and a wide extent of charity is required if we would believe that the signory was unacquainted with a design which he there unsuccessfully meditated against the life of Francesco.

But the year was not permitted to close without an invasion of the Paduan territories, where the King of Hungary succoured his ally, and fortune at first smiled upon his arms. The Venetians redoubled their efforts, routed the

confederates in a second battle, and took their general prisoner. The Hungarians retreated, and their desertion compelled the Lord of Padua to accept terms which the victors imposed upon him, and which sufficiently evinced that their resentment was undiminished. The boundary line of the two states was to be adjusted by a commission framed entirely of Venetians. Carrara was to pay by instalments 230,000 ducats to the public coffers, and 300 ducats annually to the treasury of St. Mark ; he was to demolish all his forts, to surrender certain towns as hostages, to permit an entirely free trade to Venetian merchants within his territories, to draw his whole supply of salt from the works of Chiozza ; and last, and most galling of all, in his own person or that of his son, to proffer an oath of fidelity, and to solicit pardon on his knees* from the republic. This humiliating condition was fulfilled, as may be supposed, by his representative ; and the aid of Petrarch was required for the composition and the delivery of a speech which it was thought necessary should accompany the ceremony. On the first day on which an audience was granted for the purpose, the poet's memory failed him ; and unable to recollect that which he had written, he was obliged to request another sitting of the council for his reception. It was granted on the following morning, and his speech was then much applauded, but it has never been printed.

Little sagacity is needed to determine that a peace so unequal carried in its bosom the seeds of early war. The depression of Venice became necessary to Carrara, not less for the restoration of his diminished power, than for the satisfaction of his injured pride : and no artifice was wanting, no intrigue was spared, to excite and to combine an overwhelming league which should secure his revenge. He first succeeded in instigating the Duke of Austria once again to renew hostilities ; but this dispute was speedily adjusted by the surrender of the towns to which Leopold asserted a claim ; for the signory already descried the far more heavy tempest which was gathering in the horizon, and hastened to free themselves from an enemy whom it was still in their power to conciliate.

On this occasion they received good service from the

* Cesaro, *ist. Padovana, avud Muratori*, xvii. 196.

Count di Collalto, one of the most powerful lords of the Trevisano. He warned them of the preparations of Leopold, of which they were wholly unsuspecting ; and his fidelity was the more remarkable, because on a former occasion he had appeared in arms against the republic. When Louis of Hungary unsuccessfully besieged Treviso, Collalto had served under him with great distinction, and it is to the sagacity of that prince that the count's subsequent line of politics may be referred. "I have an esteem for you, Collalto," said the king one day to him after his retreat to Buda, "remember the advice which I am going to offer. Never be guilty of the folly of quarrelling with neighbours who are more powerful than yourself, under the hope of being assisted by a distant ally. It is quite as dangerous as having your house on fire while water is out of reach." The count perceived the wisdom of the aphorism, and from that hour attached himself firmly to Venice.

A petty war which occupied part of the years 1376 and 1377 would not deserve mention here, but that it is remarkable for the first use of cannon in Italy. They were employed by the Venetians in an attack upon Quero ; and the chronicler of Treviso has described them with no small tokens of astonishment. "These," says Redusio, "are huge iron weapons, bored throughout their whole length, and having large mouths. Within them is placed a round stone, upon a powder composed of sulphur, charcoal, and saltpetre. This powder is ignited at a hole, and the stone is discharged with such violence that no wall can resist it. You would believe that God was thundering."

While the resentment cherished by Carrara was seeking instruments for its gratification in Italy, a dispute in a far distant quarter was preparing for him a more powerful ally than he had as yet contemplated. It awakened a fourth struggle between Venice and Genoa, more bloody than any in which they had been engaged heretofore, and in its course leading each republic to the extreme verge of destruction. In order to obtain a clear view of the origin of this war, we must briefly revert to some earlier transactions ; premising that the Genoese, after three years' experience of the government of Visconti, had expelled his lieutenant, and by another revolution in 1356, had again established their former ducal administration,

The increasing power of the Turks was already beginning to menace that conquest of the Greek empire which, ere the lapse of many years, was to be entirely effected ; and in 1369, the Palæologas (Calojohnnes V.) who held its uncertain sceptre, traversed Europe to solicit aid against the Infidels by whom he was beset. Urban V. accepted with distinguished favour the renunciation of the errors of the Eastern church which this weak prince offered at his feet. The holy father was prodigal of bulls ; and when the emperor held the bridle of his mule, he furnished him with letters missive to every power in Christendom. But the season of crusades was past ; from each court which Calojohnnes visited he encountered cold refusals ; and at Venice, to which he had always shown especial favour, he did little more than raise with difficulty a sufficient loan to defray the expenses of his homeward voyage. At the moment of his embarkation a question arose about sureties : the emperor had not any to offer, and it was intimated to him by the signory, that without these or the repayment of his debt he could not be permitted to depart. The degraded prince applied to his eldest son, Andronicus, to relieve him from this shameful embarrassment, but he was refused ; and unless he had been assisted by the filial piety of his younger son, Manuel, he must have been detained by his creditors. Hopeless of aid from the Christian sovereigns, the unhappy monarch, on his return to Constantinople, became the tributary and the vassal of the first Amurath, and, sunk in voluptuousness, he endeavoured to forget his dis honour. He was aroused from this slumber by a dangerous conspiracy. At Adrianople, which, wrested from his crown, had become the capital of the Othmans, Andronicus had formed an intimate connexion with Sauzes, the son of Amurath. Both of these young princes regarded with like impatience the barrier interposed between themselves and the throne, of which they coveted immediate possession ; and in the death of their fathers they saw the surest step to power. The conspiracy was discovered and suppressed by Amurath, who, having deprived his own son of sight, or, according to other authorities, having beheaded him,* dis-

* Carelino, the continuator of Andrea Dandolo's *Chronicle* (ap. Muratori, xii. 443), represents Amurath as adopting the milder punishment,

missed Andronicus in chains to his father, with a warning that he should estimate the fidelity of the Greek emperor according to the measure of the punishment which he inflicted. Calojohannes, no less cruel than cowardly, exceeded the Barbarian in severity, and ordered the blinding not only of Andronicus, but also of his son, a child of five years old. The executioners, from mercy or incapacity, performed their horrid task but ineffectually ; and the boiling vinegar which they applied destroyed only one eye in Andronicus, and left his son with a distorted and imperfect vision in both. During two years' imprisonment, the captive prince intrigued with the Genoese of Pera, whom the reigning emperor had never favoured. By their assistance an escape was planned and executed : the persons of Calojohannes and his other sons were secured ; and the conflicting parties, exchanging fortunes, were transferred, the one from his palace to the dungeon recently occupied by his son, the other from that dungeon to his father's

A. D. 1376.

throne. The price stipulated by the Genoese for this service was the cession of Tenedos, an island important to their commerce, as it commanded the mouth of the Dardanelles. But the natives, as well as the governor of that island, were attached to the dethroned emperor ; and refusing to acknowledge the usurpers, they closed their ports against the galleys despatched by the Genoese to take possession. This intended change of masters in Tenedos, and the entire control which Genoa now exercised over the throne of Constantinople, were matters of high import to Venice ; but the hostile measures which there can be little doubt she would sooner or later have adopted, in order to dispute the virtual mastery of the East, were much accelerated by the romantic daring of an individual citizen.

Few families existed in the *Lagune* more ancient or more illustrious than that of Zeno. Carlo, destined so much to increase the celebrity of his house, was the son of Pietro Zeno, who, among other public charges, had held the government of Padua, and of Agnes, sprung from the equally noble stock of Dandolo. The patronage of Clement VI.

and he is followed by Gibbon and Daru. Phranza (i. 16) asserts the reverse. We fear the Byzantine is most likely to be correct of the two, and so he has been held by Sismondi,

had decided the course of life in which the young Zeno was to be engaged ; and that pontiff, after charging himself with his education when he had been left an orphan in early years by the death of his father in an expedition against Smyrna, bestowed upon him a rich benefice at Patras. The long series of hazards to which Carlo Zeno was exposed commenced even with his youth. During his preparatory studies at Padua he was attacked by a robber, plundered, and left for dead ; and his pursuits, on his recovery, appear to have been but little adapted to the grave habits of a future ecclesiastic. Stripped of all that he possessed at the gaming-table, he converted his books into money, abandoned the university, and joining some of the roving bands which at that time formed the Italian armies, he served with them during the next five years. His reappearance at Venice surprised his friends, who believed him to be long since dead ; nor is it likely that their astonishment was decreased when they found that the *Condottiere* had returned in order to take possession of his benefice. On his arrival at Patras, however, it was in his military rather than his ecclesiastical character that he was to be first distinguished ; for the town being attacked by the Turks, Zeno placed himself at the head of the garrison, conducted them to a sortie, repulsed the besiegers, and was carried from the ditch so grievously wounded, that he would have been buried but for an opportune show of faint signs of life while his comrades were preparing for his interment. Even when his scars were healed, it was not in the fates that he should become a canon ; for a duel postponed his ordination, and soon afterward he interposed a yet further barrier to a spiritual life by marrying a beautiful Greek. He then engaged in the service of the King of Cyprus, by whom he was employed in numerous missions of importance, which extended his travels into France, Germany, and England. On the death of his first wife, he married a daughter of the noble house of Justiniani ; and employing himself in commerce, he made frequent voyages to the Levant and Black Sea. At the moment of which we are now speaking, he was engaged on some private affairs in Constantinople.

The turbulent youth and wild adventures, the careless demeanour and undaunted bravery of Carlo Zeno, had

acquired for him great notoriety, and seemed to point him out as a fitting agent in any desperate enterprise. Between the dethroned emperor and the wife of his jailer a tender bond had at one time existed ; and the remembrance, perhaps the renewal, of her former favour easily gained this woman to the interests of the captive. Calojohannes was well acquainted with Zeno, from his frequent visits to Constantinople, and he now employed his mistress to open a communication with his former friend. Little else than the mere peril of the attempt was needed to excite Zeno to undertake it ; and he ardently coveted the glory of avenging an injured parent upon an unnatural child, of restoring an imprisoned emperor to his throne, and at the same time of rendering an important service to his own country. Eight hundred resolute men were secretly prepared to obey his summons ; and with this petty band he doubted not to surprise, to overawe, and to guide the timid, luxurious, and fickle population of Constantinople.

The tower of Amena, in which Calojohannes was confined, overlooked the sea ; and a boat and a rope-ladder, one night, conveyed Zeno to the chamber of the illustrious prisoner. But when he urged the imprisoned emperor to descend, overcome either by fear, or, as he pleaded, by parental affection, Calojohannes refused to leave behind him two sons, who shared his captivity in other cells, and whose lives, on the discovery of his escape, would probably be sacrificed to the vengeance of their savage brother. "These tears and reflections," answered Zeno, "are now too late : I quit you, and you must choose your own course without the loss of a moment ; but if you do not follow, count no more on my assistance." His entreaties were unavailing ; and hastily letting himself down again from the window, he reached his comrades in sufficient time to disband them without discovery.

The emperor continued to languish in confinement till impatience triumphed over his fears. He renewed his intercourse with Carlo Zeno ; and in order yet further to stimulate a fresh attempt, he transmitted to him an official grant of the sovereignty of Tenedos in favour of Venice, bearing the impress of the imperial signature. Zeno, overjoyed at this unlooked-for bounty of fortune, returned a prompt acceptance of the undertaking. His answer was intrusted to

the former messenger, and unhappily, being lost by her on its road, fell into the hands of Andronicus, who obtained further confessions from the miserable woman by torture. Zeno, more fortunate, received timely forewarning of the discovery of his plot ; and throwing himself into a boat, gained a Venetian squadron then convoying some merchantmen through the Propontis, under the command of his father-in-law, Justiniani.

If the admiral was surprised at the hurried apparition of Zeno, how much more so was he on hearing the cause of his flight, and on reading the important document which he bore with him. Its validity, as granted by a prisoner, was of little moment, provided obedience could be secured to it in Tenedos ; and the well-known disposition of the governor rendered such an event highly probable. Zeno and Justiniani set sail with ten galleys to that island, were received with open arms, and raised the banner of St. Mark on its shores.

There had not been time, even if Justiniani and his son-in-law had been so inclined, to communicate their intentions to the senate ; and the deed having been now done on their own responsibility, it remained to secure the ratification of it from their government. For that purpose, leaving a strong garrison behind them, they proceeded to Venice, and by representing that the grant must be considered binding, because conferred by him who was the legitimate emperor ; that such an aggression was not wanting to excite the enmity of Andronicus, who had always shown hostile dispositions : and that even if it did so, his weakness rendered him an inconsiderable foe ; above all, by displaying the vast commercial importance of Tenedos, and that if it did not belong to Venice, it would assuredly fall into the hands of Genoa, they calmed the fears and roused the ambition of the council, which at first had viewed the transaction with dismay. Persuaded, however, by the arguments now offered to them, they despatched reinforcements to the garrison of Tenedos, and gave the command of them, as he richly merited, to Carlo Zeno himself. Antonio Veniero embarked with him as a colleague.

The consequences which had been foreseen by the Venetian government were in part realized. Andronicus viewed this seizure of a dependency of the empire with heavy

indignation ; and the Genoese, mortified both by their own loss and by the better fortune of their rival, eagerly stimulated him to revenge. All Venetians within the imperial territories were arrested, and their property sequestered. The Genoese provided two-and-twenty galleys, and the emperor embarked an army, assumed its command in person,

A. D. 1377. and set sail for Tenedos in November, 1377. Veniero undertook the defence of the citadel, and the out-works were intrusted to Zeno, with three hundred infantry and a few companies of archers. In two attacks on two succeeding days, in each of which he was wounded —on the latter thrice and severely—Zeno repulsed the Greeks with great carnage ; for the fury of his soldiers was roused to the uttermost when they beheld their general fall senseless and exhausted from loss of blood. Andronicus, perceiving that his efforts were vain, hastened back to Constantinople, leaving to the Venetians the right of conquest in addition to that of cession. His return was marked with yet greater misfortune. Calojohannes, by the aid of some Venetians, who bribed his guards, escaped from prison ; and taking refuge at the court of Amurath, secured his aid by the surrender of Philadelphia, the sole city remaining to the emperor without the Bosphorus. Andronicus, unable to resist the demands of the powerful sultan, restored the throne to his father, who immediately rewarded Manuel, his second and more faithful son, by calling him to a participation of the imperial authority.

Another cause of irritation between Genoa and Venice had arisen in a different quarter of the East. On A. D. 1372. the assassination of Pietro Lusignano by his brothers, the throne of Cyprus had passed to his son, another Pietro. It was customary that the kings of Cyprus should be crowned twice—once at Nicosia as sovereigns of the island, and again at Famagosta, the port from which the crusaders had embarked, under their empty title of Kings of Jerusalem. During the latter celebration, a dispute concerning precedence occurred between the Genoese and Venetian consuls ; and the anger of the former was inflamed by the decision of the Cypriote authorities in favour of their rivals. The contest was renewed at the royal banquet, which succeeded ; and that solemnity was converted into another feast of the Centaurs and the Lapithæ,

by the fury of the opponents. The Genoese, not content with launching the massive goblets which decorated the board at their adversaries, had recourse to daggers, which they wore concealed beneath their cloaks. This proof of afore-thought violence was considered by the Cypriotes not only as a breach of the respect due to the hospitality of the palace, but also as intimating a design upon the royal person. Without further investigation the offenders were put to death by summary process ; and the Cypriote population, fired by the belief of treason against their prince, rose in a body throughout the island, pillaged the Genoese, and so bloodily pursued them, that but one mutilated individual escaped with life to convey the heavy tidings of this massacre to his countrymen.

The Genoese, indignant at this violence, speedily despatched an armament to revenge it, and Damiano Catani took possession of Nicosia and Paphos in ^{A. D.} 1373. the summer of 1373. Forty thousand men were embarked soon after, under the brother of the doge, for the siege of Famagosta. That city resisted but seven days, when, by its surrender, the king, his uncles, and all the chief authorities fell into the power of the invaders, and the submission of the whole island rapidly followed. The conquerors are described, according as the writers of the times espoused their cause or that of Venice, to have exhibited very unusual moderation, or to have borne themselves with great harshness. If the outrage which they had endured be called to mind, it is probable that the first of these representations is most correct : for only three lives were sacrificed on the scaffold in retaliation for the popular massacre ; and though hostages and a tribute were demanded, Lusignano was still allowed to retain the kingdom which he had justly forfeited.

Yet, even if the treatment were really lenient, enough cause of offence remained to the Cypriotes ; and it can be no matter of surprise that Lusignano gladly learned the dispute concerning Tenedos, and hastened to propose a secret alliance with the Venetians against Genoa. Two princes of Italy were induced to form a like engagement ; the Marquis di Carréto occupied Castel-Franco, Noli, and Albenga ; and Visconti, the Lord of Milan, whose

daughter had been married to Lusignano, consented to employ the one hundred thousand florins destined for her portion, in an invasion of Liguria. Slight as these aids might be, Venice rejoiced in their acquisition; for never had she greater need of friends. The Genoese attributed to her agency the troubles which distracted them in Greece, in Cyprus, and nearer home; and Francesco da Carrara had long restlessly coveted revenge. Parties thus disposed were easily associated; and the crafty and active spirit of Carrara succeeded in negotiations with other princes scarcely less jealous than himself of the wealth, the power, or the pride of Venice. With the Genoese and the Lord of Padua were united the King of Hungary, the Patriarch of Aquileia, who possessed Friuli, the brothers de la Scala, Lords of Verona, the city of Ancona, the Duke of Austria, and the Queen of Naples. Such was the formidable league encountered by Venice in the momentous contest which we are about to relate; and against so numerous and powerful enemies did she embark, almost single-handed, in the memorable **WAR OF CHIOZZA.**

CHAPTER VIII.

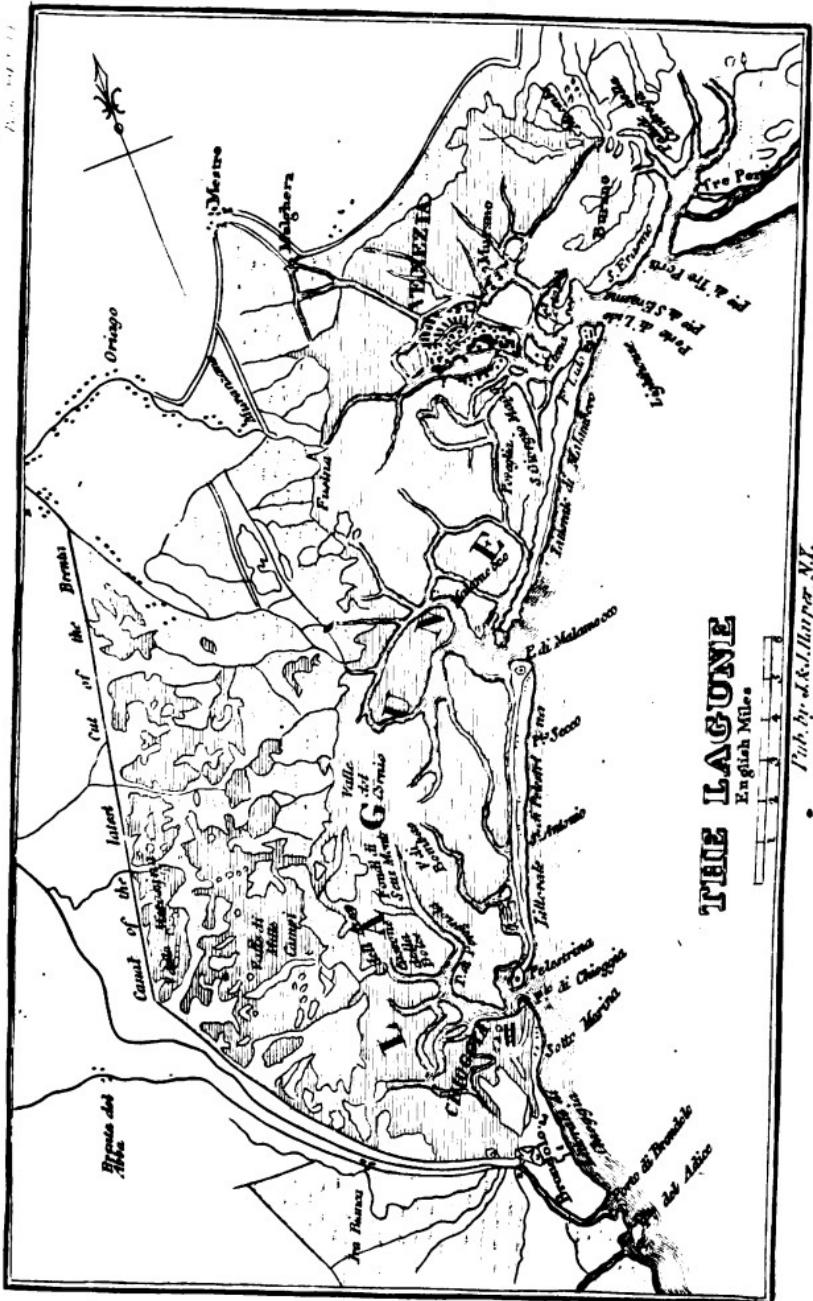
FROM A. D. 1378 TO A. D. 1381.

The War of Chiozza.

DOGE.

• ANDREA CONTARINI.

THE military events by which the war of Chiozza opened were of little importance. Carrara, driven from his first line of operations in the Trevisano by the valour and activity of Carlo Zeno, attempted a diversion by laying siege to Mestre, from which also he was repulsed. On the seas, the first struggle of the rival nations after the renewal of



THE LAGUNIE



hostilities took place near the mouth of the Tiber; A. D. and a bloody sacrifice was offered to Fortune under 1378, the very ruins of her temple at Antium. The squadron commanded by Victor Pisani counted no more May. than fourteen galleys. The Genoese, under Luigi Fiesco, were yet fewer in number; but their ten ships were either unable or unwilling to decline battle. It was not that the naval forces of the two republics had been diminished since their former wars; but hostilities had been so recently declared, that time was wanting to collect sailors, or to transfer them from merchant-vessels to ships of war; and they burned with impatience for contest ere yet fully provided with its means. On this occasion, as in the battle of the Bosphorus, the fleets encountered during a storm; and the fury of the waves deprived the Venetians of their numerical advantage, by permitting only nine ships to engage on each side. The result was unfavourable to the Genoese; one of their galleys was dashed to pieces on the rocky shore, five surrendered to the enemy, and the remainder were preserved only by the violence of the tempest, which forbade pursuit. Even of the prizes, one only could be saved, and the Venetians were compelled to fire the others; but eight hundred prisoners, among whom were Fiesco himself and eighteen nobles, remained in their hands. The fickle Genoese punished their civil magistrate for a disaster which might have been more justly attributed to the fortune of war; and a fresh revolution compelled the abdication of the doge.

The three galleys which escaped directed their course, not to Genoa, but to the Adriatic; and there forming a junction with a much larger force under Luciano Doria, the Genoese, even after their defeat, insulted the Venetian capital; and with a squadron now amounting to twenty-two ships, intercepted the traders which approached the gulf, pillaged and burned Grado and Caorlo, and found supplies and sure anchorage in the port of Zara. Meantime, Pisani, recalled to the Adriatic, coasted Dalmatia, possessed himself of Cattaro, Sebenigo, and Arbo; and, after two attacks, reluctantly abandoned all hope of subduing Trau. The winter, contrary to his judgment, was passed in the roads of Pola; for though his squadron needed refitting, the senate considered Istria too important to be left defenceless

Pola afforded few of those materials which were necessary for his re-equipment ; and, yet more unhappily, disease began to show itself among his crew. Its ravages A. D. 1379. were frightful ; and as spring returned, of the thirty galleys which he commanded, only six could be manned for service. These, however, and eleven more which had been despatched from home, put to sea for the protection of some Apulian convoys. With his squadron heavily injured by a storm, the loss of two ships captured after having been driven into Ancona, and a severe wound received in a skirmish off Zara, he returned to his former station, weakened and discouraged.

It was not till the close of May that Luciano Doria was prepared to act on the offensive, and he then appeared off Pola with twenty-two galleys. Pisani's force now amounted to twenty-four ; of these, however, few had their complement of men ; and he remained steadily at anchor, determined to refuse the challenge. But his officers were impatient of their long confinement in a distant port ; they looked to battle as affording them the surest chance of returning home ; the *provveditori* joined in this rash clamour ; and Pisani, accused of pusillanimous backwardness to combat, and unable any longer to resist their importunity, embarked such of the inhabitants as he could prevail upon to serve, and gave the signal for attack. No more than twenty of his galleys could be manned ; and with these he bore down so furiously, that in the first onset Doria's own ship was taken, and himself killed, at the moment in which he raised his beaver to reconnoitre the positions of the two fleets. The Genoese, fired rather than dispirited by the loss of their admiral, redoubled their efforts under his brother Ambrosio, and two thousand Venetians fell in the short space of two hours. The enemy still pressed upon Pisani till his line was broken, and all then became rout and confusion. Fifteen galleys and one thousand nine hundred prisoners, of whom twenty-four were of noble blood, fell into the hands of the conquerors.* The chronicler of this war, in relating the treatment of some of these prisoners, gives a fearful picture of the cruelty and barbarism of the times. Eight hundred were mercenaries ; and on the arrival of

* Fl. Biondinus, dec. ii. lib. 10, ad ann.

the Genoese in Zara, these were all beheaded in cold blood.* With the poor remains of his once gallant fleet, now reduced to seven vessels, Pisani took refuge in Parenzo; and thence, obeying the summons of the council, returned to Venice. It was enough for his suspicious masters that his former glory had gained the people's love; and the past triumphs, therefore, which might justly have counterpoised his present reverse, were added, by their jealousy, to the sinking scale. Pisani had never coveted popularity, but it was felt that he had deserved and that he had obtained it; and in the narrow policy of the Venetian government, great merit was considered to be as dangerous to the security of the state as great ambition. If the voices of the *avvogadori* had prevailed, his punishment would have been death; and the sentence was deemed lenient which condemned him to secret imprisonment and five years' exclusion from all public charges.

It was plain that the next efforts of the Genoese would be directed against the capital itself; for Venice no longer possessed a fleet with which to dispute the entrance of her own sea; and the sole disposable force which remained to her, except one which had been despatched to a distant station under Carlo Zeno, consisted of the seven galleys which had escaped with Pisani. No time, therefore, was to be lost in putting into such a state of defence as her crippled means permitted the line of seabank which edged the Adriatic, and that little knot of islands which may be called her suburbs.† It will be remembered that the gulf between the Piave and the Adige, which forms the *Lagune*, is protected by a chain of long and narrow islands, through which six channels admit a passage into the great internal basin. Of these the most northern is the *Porto di tre Porti*, navigable only by the very smallest craft. The island of *San Erasmo* intervenes between this and a second opening,

* Chinazzo, *opud* Muratori, xv. 721.

† Perhaps Bellin, in his *Descript. Geog. du Golfe de Venise*, is the best guide to the modern *Lagune*. He is brief, but distinct. We know not on what authority Sismondi has made a different distribution of the ports from that commonly adopted and given in the text. It must be confessed that the mediæval topography of Chiezza and its neighbourhood presents a good deal of difficulty; much of the face of this ever-shifting coast is changed since the fourteenth century; and many of the places named by the chroniclers have ceased to exist, at least in the maps.

bearing the name of the saint just mentioned. The *Porto di San Nicolo del Lido*, a third channel, which is now completely choked, at the period of which we are treating was the most important of all the inlets, and might be called especially the port of Venice. Southward from this strait, the island of *Lido*, and the long sandy *Littorale di Malamocco*, extending for nearly two leagues, form an outwork in front of the capital ; and are disjoined from the similar barrier of *Pelestrina* by the *Porto di Malamocco*, at present the deepest channel. At the southern extremity of *Pelestrina* opens the *Porto di Chiozza*, taking its name from the town to which it leads. Immediately in front of this town is placed the island of *Brondolo* ; forming, together with an opposite bank on the south, the sixth and last channel, much impeded by the deposits of the *Brenta* and the *Adige*. The direct communication between Venice and Chiozza is established by a canal, which traverses the whole length of the *Lagune*, in a course of about five-and-twenty miles.

Before preparations could be made for their reception, the Genoese had collected a force of eight-and-forty galleys in the port of Zara, sixteen of which crossed the Adriatic, and chased a merchant-vessel within sight of Venice. July 4. The captain, finding escape hopeless, took to his boats and saved his crew ; while three of the Genoese ships pillaged and fired their prize. None of their yet far greater sufferings during the following calamitous portion of the war appears to have affected the Venetians more painfully than this disgrace. The shore was thronged with burghers from the neighbouring capital, indignant but impotent spectators of this violation of their native borders. The hostile fleet coasted along Malamocco, burnt the chief village on Pelestrina, and anchoring off Chiozza, took possession of its eastern suburb ; which, separated from it by a bridge, was then known as the Lesser Chiozza. The garrison, having attempted a sortie, was repulsed with much loss ; and the Genoese, satisfied with their partial success and the ignominy inflicted upon their enemy, re-embarked and made sail for Ancona. Thence, after a few days' refreshment, they crossed once more to Zara ; trailing from the sterns of their galleys, in token of contempt and defiance, the standards captured in their victory over Pisani. If, instead of amusing themselves by this empty show of

triumph, they had at once borne down upon Chiozza, so profound was the terror which they had impressed upon its inhabitants, so incompetent were its means of defence, there is little doubt but that it must have fallen an easy conquest.

Meantime, in Venice recourse was had to prayers and processions; nor were more active measures neglected. By dint of extraordinary exertion, the arsenal equipped fifteen galleys, which were placed under the command of Taddeo Justiniani; six only of these, however, became available for service. The regular mariners, for the most part, were absent with Zeno; and so indignant were the populace at the undeserved imprisonment of Pisani, that, notwithstanding the imminent peril of the city, volunteers could not be found to enrol their names in the levy. In the port of Lido, works of extraordinary strength were thrown up for the protection of the capital. On the opposite shores, at its entrance, were built two forts; the germs, perhaps, of the castles which now defend it, rather than, as has been said, those castles themselves; for the short time allowed for preparation appears to have forbidden structures of so much solidity. The strait, on either hand, bristled with a mixed array both of ancient and modern artillery, the use of the former not having as yet been abandoned, owing to the still imperfect state of the latter; and the catapult, the balista, and the perriere were mounted by the side of rude and unwieldy cannon. Vast hulks (*sandoni*) were moored fore and aft below, so as to remain motionless during the flux and reflux of the tide. These were guarded by an iron *cheval de frise*, and connected by a massive triple chain, which crossed the channel. Behind these chains, and grappled firmly to them and to each other, were ranged three of the large vessels known as *cocche*, completely armed, and protected from fire by a thick covering of hides. On these, and above the chains, were placed fascines, so as to form a platform capable of supporting yet other batteries and military engines. On the land above Lido, by the church of San Nicolo, a deep fosse was excavated, and surmounted by a palisade. A cordon of sentinels and batteries was disposed along the *aggere*; and at Malamocco two decked vessels were placed across the channel, and a fort was built on the shore. Similar precautions were taken at Chiozza, whose garrison

was strengthened by a reinforcement of a thousand men. Every citizen who could bear arms was summoned to actual service ; and in order more effectually to obstruct the navigation of the *Lagune*, in case the enemy should burst the barriers which we have just described, and succeed in penetrating within, the piles which marked the deep channels and watercourses were carefully removed.

The remainder of July was passed by Doria in collecting his forces at Zara, before he proceeded to execute the commission received from his government to sack Venice, and to carry home with him as many of her nobles as he could secure ; one reservation being made, that he should obtain the permission of Carrara. So anxiously indeed did the Genoese regard the continuance of their alliance with that prince, that the admiral was instructed to yield obedience to him to the uttermost point, even if he should enjoin the death of every individual prisoner. Venice, if she had been taken, had little therefore to expect short of extermination !* Never was fleet more gallantly provided than that which Doria now commanded ; for, besides his forty-eight ships of war, he was accompanied by many hundred sail of lighter vessels, provision-ships, and transports. The most lively enthusiasm was kindled among his followers ; and as he reviewed them before orders for sailing were issued, he was received, while passing from ship to ship, with deafening shouts—“To Venice ! to Venice ! *Viva San Giorgio !*”

Venice, however, for the present, was too strongly fortified to permit his approach ; and he resolved to begin his operations at Chiozza, off which port he anchored on the 6th of August. Carrara had received notice of his design ; and, anxious to effect a junction with his allies, he collected at Padua one hundred light barks (*ganzeruoli*), with which he intended to convey his troops down the *Fiume Vecchio* of the Brenta. Till he reached Castel Caro, his progress was unimpeded ; but there the Venetians had sunk a large vessel, laden with stones and ballast, so as effectually to

* *Se egli la pigliava, la dovesse saccheggiare, e far prigionieri quanti gentiluomini poteva, e tutti mandargli a Genova, salvo, se per lo Signore di Padova non ci fosse fatto altra deliberazione, al cui volere ordinaronon si dovesse obbedire, se ben' havesse ordinato, che fassero tutti decollati in mare.*—Chinazzo, 732.

chose the stream. With incredible labour, in the course of a single night Carrara dug a fresh channel, thirty paces wide and half a mile in length, into which he turned the obstructed waters ; and towing his barges round the sunken ship, he placed them at the disposal of Doria, two days after that admiral had arrived at Chiozza, himself remaining on *terra firma* to direct other military operations. The possession of Chiozza was of the uttermost importance to both the contending parties, on account of its proximity to Venice, of the large revenue derived from its salt-works, and of its facility of communication with Lombardy. It was the key of the *Lagune* ; and if its walls were once lost to its present masters, it seemed that but a single step remained between the invaders and Venice. It is no wonder, therefore, that it was hotly contested.

The works framed for the defence of its port were now attacked on both sides ; from the Adriatic by the Genoese, from the *Lagune* by the Paduans ; and their joint force amounted to 24,000 men. The town, like Venice, is for the most part surrounded by shallows and tide-creeks. Its distance from the entrance of its port is about a mile ; and before Chiozza itself could be invested, it was necessary that this approach should be gained. A day was sufficient for the attack and capture of the *sandone* moored in its channel. This was immediately burnt, and the hostile fleet moved up in front of the town. The period between the 10th and the 16th was employed in murderous assaults, in which little appears to have been gained except the capture of the *tête de pont* connecting the isle of Brondolo with Chiozza. The bridge itself was contested on the morning of the 16th ; and at first to the advantage of the besieged. At the moment, however, in which the assailants were giving way, a vessel charged with combustibles was driven against the piers. The Venetians, partly terrified by the cry which rapidly circulated that the bridge was in flames and all retreat cut off,—partly stupefied by the smoke which arose from the fireship, hastily withdrew within the walls, to which the enemy pursued closely, and entered with them *pêle-mêle*. Defence was no longer availing to the panic-stricken garrison ; and wherever it was attempted they were overpowered by superior numbers. Not less than 6000 Venetians perished during this short siege ; and

3500 prisoners were taken after the storm. Doria obeyed the injunctions of his masters to the letter; for when Carrara, thirsting for vengeance, offered to purchase two of the noble prisoners who had fallen into the hands of the Genoese, the price of blood was accepted, and they were instantly put to the sword.

Though won chiefly by the Genoese, the town, according to the stipulations of their treaty of alliance, was surrendered to Carrara. He hastened to survey his new conquest; and the enthusiasm with which he was received, is picturesquely described by the chronicler. He was carried along the lines on the shoulders of the soldiery, whose joy vented itself in exclamations which, at least to modern ears, savour of profaneness; and he was hailed with loud shouts of "*Carro! Carro! Osanna!** *Benedictus qui venit!*"

Chiozza was stormed at sunset; by midnight, its fall was known in Venice; and the consternation which this announcement excited was scarcely less than if the capital itself had been lost. Groups of terrified women hurried through the streets, manifesting their fear and sorrow by shrill cries and vehement gestures. The men, who had been called to arms by a signal of alarm rung from the bell-tower of St. Mark, were silent and dejected; or, if they spoke, it was in a few broken words which implied despair of their country. The churches were thronged by trembling crowds, who pressed to the confessional; and after obtaining absolution, continued to implore participation in the Eucharist, as if it were the *vaticum* for their last moments.† Every instant it was expected that the victorious enemy would pursue his success; and that the banners of Carrara, now floating on Chiozza, would surmount the ducal palace. If, indeed, the Genoese had listened to the counsel of the Lord of Padua, the event might probably have been fatal to Venice. Carrara urged his allies to profit by the impression of terror which they had doubtless created, and, without the pause of an hour, to cross the *Lagune*; but Doria was far less ardent. He wished to establish himself securely in the conquest already won,

* Chinazzo, 727. The armorial bearing of the Carrara family was *un Carro rosso*; probably a *carreau* or *quarrel*. See a note in Syme's *Portraiture of Francesco da Carrara*, from Gattari, p. xli.

† P. Justiniani, p. 180.

before he risked further operations ; and he contended that Venice must fall, even without another blow. By sea she was blockaded, her supplies were intercepted, her few remaining galleys had no means of extrication, the neighbouring coasts were covered with her enemies, she was without allies, without stores, and all that was left to her were a few narrow strips of barren sand. Prudence, he said, forbade the encounter of even a slight hazard, in order to accelerate, by a few days, that triumph which must be theirs ere long spontaneously.

The cry of the populace in St. Mark's, during this interval, was raised for peace, and they demanded an immediate negotiation. The Doge Contarini seems to have preserved a firmness and presence of mind wanting to his fellow-citizens ; but at the same time he clearly perceived the fearful strait to which he was reduced, and he wisely resolved to attempt a pacific overture. Safe conduct was obtained for messengers who bore a despatch, not couched in that haughty tone wherein, of old, the republic was wont to dictate to her vassal ; but exhibiting, in its style and superscription, an acknowledgment that her superiority was at an end. Carrara was no longer addressed as simply *noble*, but by the far more sounding and pompous title of *powerful and magnificent lord* ; and the doge, who hitherto, according to the usage of sovereign princes, had been accustomed to commence with his signature, now added it at the foot of his missive. But the apprehensions of the writer were betrayed by far more decisive tokens than any trifling alterations of form. A blank sheet of paper was presented to the Lord of Padua, who was besought to inscribe it with such terms as he thought fitting ; and to these, before they were seen, Contarini promised submission ; with the sole proviso that Venice should still remain an independent state. Such a proposal was not to be rejected hastily, and Carrara hesitated, and probably would have consented ; but Doria coveted a far deeper vengeance, and fearful that the ancient rival of his country might elude his grasp if the hold were relaxed but for an instant, he anticipated the answer of his ally, and replied for both. The ambassadors, seeking to propitiate him, had brought with them some Genoese prisoners, ransomless. "Take back your captives," were his words, as he refused the proffer. "Ere many hours, I shall

deliver both them and all their comrades. By God above, ye signors of Venice, you must expect no peace either from the Lord of Padua or from our republic, till we ourselves have bridled the horses of your St. Mark. Place but the reins once in our hands, and we shall know how to keep them quiet for the future.”*

This reply, forbidding every hope of accommodation, was not the only evil tidings which the envoys brought with them on their return. All the posts on the continental borders of the *Lagune* had surrendered; the garrison of Malamocco, after destroying its works, had been compelled to fall back on Lido; so that part of the very island which defended the port of Venice was now in possession of the enemy. A single outpost in the middle of the salt-works (the *Castello delle Saline*) still maintained itself; and its honourable resistance was supported till the close of the war. With this exception, the territory of the *Dogado* was reduced to little more than the space covered by the houses of the capital; and so closely had the invaders pressed even upon these, that the bell of the great Campanile was no longer employed to peal its customary notes, lest the operations which it directed should be revealed to the vigilance of the besiegers.

The construction of a squadron which might delay the enemy’s approach presented the only slender hope of existence which the Venetians still dared to encourage. Every hand, therefore, was summoned to the arsenal; and there, the scene itself, the works on which they were employed, the end to which their labours were addressed, each association connected with naval objects, forcibly recalled to memory the great commander under whom they had so often fought and conquered. The image of Pisani was present to every heart; his name burst at once from every tongue. The artisans, the burghers, the merchants, the soldiers, the mariners, rushed, as it were, with a single impulse to the palace gates; and thronging round them with impetuosity, demanded the release of their admiral. It was no fit season for the government to contest a petition thus urgently pressed; and to their fears of popular disaffection might

* The whole of this speech is assigned by Chinazzo, as we have given it, to Doria. Dart, contrary both to authorities and probabilities, has divided it between the Genoese admiral and Carrara.

now be added a belief that no other citizen possessed qualities so fully applicable to the particular exigency by which they were required. The signory, accordingly, notified to Pisani that he was free, and that on Aug. 19. the following morning he might resume his seat in the great council. Instead of throwing himself rashly into the arms of his partisans, and draining the full cup of popular favour which was proffered to his lips, Pisani remained that night in his cell. He passed its hours in religious exercises with a priest, in penitence and in confession. On the morrow, he first attended mass and communicated, as a testimony of freedom from all resentment; and he then presented himself in the council-chamber with looks bearing no trace which implied remembrance of his wrongs. He listened with placid dignity to the ambiguous harangue in which Contarini neither impugned the justice of the republic nor denied the innocence of the prisoner whom she now released from his bonds; and in his reply, renouncing every private feeling, he devoted himself to the service which his country required at his hands. "Would to heaven!" were his burning words in conclusion, "that I could bear to the holy task to which you invite me, and which I embrace with my whole soul and spirit, a vigour and an intellect proportioned to my desires and affections! Those, at least, are not likely to be wanting to Venice." With equal modesty he declined the loud testimonies of applause which were lavished on him by the assembled crowd, as he descended into the piazza: and turning to some who shouted "*Pisani, viva Pisani!*" "Stop, stop, my friends," he said, gently reproving them, "the cry of a true Venetian is *Viva San Marco!*"*

Even yet, however, the jealous spirit of the signory had but half atoned for its former injustice. Pisani was appointed to a command; but by no means invested with the same powers which he possessed before his disgrace; only the troops which were encamped at Lido were placed under his orders, and even over these he held but divided authority—his coadjutor being a Veronese captain, Giacomo de' Caballi, to whom the generalship had been previously assigned.

* These words are attributed by Sanuto to Pisani while he is yet in prison; and Daru on that account has altogether disbelieved that they were employed. We have related them according to Sabellico's representation, under which all improbability disappears.

The citizens were ignorant of this narrow arrangement of the senate; and believing that Pisani was their admiral, the poorer classes thronged to enrol themselves under his command as mariners, the rich to tender their estates for the public service, and to pour into his hands the cost of whole galleys. Without a murmur, or even an implication that his merits were undervalued, he meekly represented that he was not qualified to receive their tenders; and directing the patriotic citizens to the senators, as the proper officers to whom they should apply, he addressed himself to the immediate duties of his post, and the inspection of the fortifications. Another burst of popular feeling succeeded, and it was met, like the first, by similar concession; Pisani was restored to all his former honours, and once again named admiral.

His first care was to strengthen the lines at Lido, where a wall was raised beyond the fosse, and flanked by two towers. Pisani himself laid the first stone, and four days sufficed for the entire erection. The curtain by which the towers were united was completed in fifteen more, by the unwearyed labours of every class of citizens; and Sabellico points to the remains of this great work, which existed at the time in which he wrote his history, on the southern shore of the port. But it was no less necessary to protect the approaches from the *Lagune* than from the Adriatic; for, however tortuous and difficult might be the navigation of those inner channels, an enemy in possession of Chiozza would certainly attempt, would probably accomplish it in the end. Venice, from its very site and construction, would not admit of regular fortification; all, therefore, that could be done was to sink *cocche* in different stations, which might serve as advanced batteries, and to organize a flotilla of boats, which should patrol day and night without interruption, to prevent surprise. Meantime, the works in the arsenal proceeded rapidly; and in order to acquaint the unskilled mechanics with the service for which they had volunteered, the canal of *Giudecca** (*Zuecca*, as it is pronounced) was set apart for their drill. Its entrance was guarded by a strong boom and chain; and within it the doge and Pisani

* Originally called *Synalonga*; it received its present name when the Jews obtained permission to fix in its neighbourhood.

daily superintended the manœuvres and encouraged the ardour of their embryo mariners. So low had her fortunes sunk, so shorn was Venice of her former undisputed naval pre-eminence, that the queen of the Adriatic, who once gave maritime law almost to the whole world, now centred her hopes of existence on a handful of landsmen, practising within the narrow bounds of a street of her own city.

It is not to be supposed that the Genoese during these transactions remained wholly idle. Eight days after the storm of Chiozza, a squadron reconnoitred the port of Lido ; and on the 1st of September, a yet larger force disembarked some troops on San Erasmo ; so that each island which flanked the harbour was partly in possession of the enemy ; but on the following day, as the fleet neared the strait, it was received with so warm a fire from the batteries, that it hastily withdrew. Scarcely an hour passed without some petty engagement between the light barks which traversed the *Lagune*, or skirmishes between the outposts on the *aggere*. Even if the fortune of these contests was for the most part equal, the moral effect was decidedly advantageous to the Venetians ; and those who were, not many days since, wholly prostrate in despair, now occasionally permitted themselves to hope that deliverance might still be in reserve. A second fruitless negotiation tended not a little to increase that spirit of resistance which is always generated by a sense of oppression. Prince Charles of Durazzo, nephew of the King of Hungary, had entered the Trevisano with ten thousand men, and the propositions which he offered to the doge evinced that the extinction of Venice, as an independent power, was the real object of the league against her. Peace, it was said, might be obtained, if the republic would consent to defray the expenses of the war, which were estimated at five hundred thousand ducats. As a gage for this payment, she must deposite in the hands of the allies the jewelry of St. Mark and the ducal crown. An annual tribute of fifty thousand ducats was to be tendered to the King of Hungary, without whose confirmation and investiture no future doge was to be considered as duly elected ; and as a mark of vassalage, on all festivals and days of rejoicing, the Hungarian standard was to be displayed jointly with that of

Venice on the *Piazza di San Marco*. Some obscurity hangs over the discussion of these terms, and it has been said, but it is scarcely credible, that they were at first accepted ; but the statement is far more probable which affirms that an annual tribute of one hundred thousand ducats was offered as a commutation for the more grinding conditions. There are yet other writers who maintain that the doge once contemplated the entire abandonment of the *Lagune*, and the transfer of his government to Candia. By those who have witnessed a similar emigration in modern times, terminating in the establishment of a new and far greater dominion than that which was surrendered, such a statement will not be hastily rejected. But the case of Venice and that of Portugal in our own days are widely different. The latter was absolutely won by the invaders, and if the Braganzas had remained, they must have sacrificed themselves to hopeless captivity, without a chance of benefit to their country. Contarini, on the other hand, still possessed his hearths and altars inviolate, though fearfully perilled. To quit them was to ensure their destruction ; and his flight, though attended with the certainty of shame and dishonour, would not have been accompanied by an equal certainty of personal safety. Whatever was the secret history of this negotiation, all treaty was ultimately broken off. The Hungarians found a more alluring object in the conquest of Naples ; and during the short period they continued to occupy the Trevisano, their operations were languid and ineffective.

An unexpected success, in an enterprise upon a larger scale than those to which they were now ordinarily accustomed, materially increased the ardour which had been kindled among the Venetians. Fifty of their boats penetrated by night as far as Montalbano, a station on the Brenta but a few miles above Chiozza. A galley and two smaller vessels lay there at anchor, and these the assailants surprised, boarded, and mastered. The ebbing tide prevented them from removing the galley, but it was fired and burnt to the water's edge, and the lesser prizes, with their commandant and a hundred and fifty prisoners, were borne in triumph to Venice. On their arrival, the city was intoxicated with joy ; and in these first fruits of victory were descried the pledges of a full and swollen harvest. Every

voice demanded battle, and already in the sanguine anticipation of the enthusiastic populace, to confront and to conquer the enemy appeared but one.

The force, indeed, of which the republic was now mistress might promise, at least, an even-handed contest. Never in the whole history of the world had been exhibited more splendid instances of individual sacrifice and self-devotion, than those made by the patriot Venetians. Where age or infirmity rendered personal service impossible, entire fortunes were surrendered to the state ; vast debts were remitted by creditors ; plate, jewels, and treasure were heaped into the public coffers ; the doge mortgaged his revenues ; the ecclesiastics bore arms. One holy band alone was found wanting to its country, and the Minorites excused themselves. It was written, they said, in their statutes, that no one of their brotherhood, whatever might be the occasion, should handle any weapon of offence. Their cowardly hypocrisy received its deserts, and they were banished from the *Dogado*.* Among the traders, we hear of a furrier who undertook the maintenance of one thousand armed men ; of an apothecary who equipped a galley ; of plain mechanics and simple artisans who associated to defray similar expenses. One, perhaps, of the most touching offers which this great crisis called forth was that made by Matteo Faseolo, a townsman of Chiozza, whom its loss had reduced from opulence to beggary. Carrying with him his two sons, he presented them to the magistrates. "If my estate," he said, "were such as I once possessed, all of it should be contributed to the public exigencies ; but life is now the only property which is left to me and to these. Dispose of it as you think best. Employ us either by land or sea, and gladden us by a consciousness that what little we still retain is devoted to our country."†

These demonstrations of fidelity and affection were cordially and gratefully received by the government. A decree of the grand council proclaimed that, immediately after the conclusion of a peace, 5000 ducats of gold should be distributed in yearly pensions among the poorer citizens, in proportion to their merits ; and that every foreigner who

* Sanuto, 702.

† Sabellico, dec 11. lib 6.

had rendered good service to the state should be naturalized and receive the privileges of citizenship. A yet more alluring offer was freely propounded to all classes. It was announced that at the termination of the war the XL. should be bound under a heavy penalty to convoke the *pre-gadi*, and in that assembly each of its members should be authorized to name some one citizen, whom he deemed worthy of admission to nobility. The deserts of the several candidates were to be discussed at whatever length their proposers might think fit ; and the thirty who should obtain a majority of suffrages, were to be registered, both for themselves and their posterity, as members of the grand council, and to participate in all its rights, privileges, and immunities as entirely as any original noble. No words could exceed in strength and solemnity those which were employed to confirm these provisions. More than once it was repeated that every decree which might repeal them should be null ; and in addition, it was declared that any one who proposed such a repeal should be for ever excluded, both himself and his descendants, from every magistracy, without possibility of grace or remission ; and that whoever ventured to suggest indulgence to the offenders should incur similar penalties.

Such was the zeal excited by these liberal promises that two days were sufficient to complete the crews of four-and-thirty galleys, already equipped in the arsenal. Contarini, disregarding the burden of seventy-two winters, announced that, ere long, he would lead this armament in person against the enemy ; and his resolution appears to have been delayed only from the hope of obtaining tidings of Carlo Zeno and his fleet. That gallant and adventurous captain had been detached to the Levant, before the disastrous battle of Pola. Of his subsequent proceedings nothing hitherto was known in Venice ; but no exertion had been spared to acquaint him first with the perils, now with the hopes, of his country ; and it was daily and anxiously expected that the squadron under his command might return in time to afford great additional strength to the proposed expedition. The autumn, therefore, was passed in a series of skirmishes and manœuvres which habituated the raw seamen to their new element, improved their discipline, stimulated their courage, and amused them under

the necessary delay. It was not without surprise and anxiety, that the Genoese perceived the creation of this new fleet in the blockaded capital which they had once securely deemed their own. Straitened for provisions, they had been compelled to despatch a large force to procure supplies from the Istrien coast ; in numerous little encounters with the light flotilla in the *Lagune*, they had, for the most part, been worsted ; a convoy from Padua had been intercepted ; Cavalli, the Veronese general, had forced them to abandon Malamocco ; Poveglia had been retaken in like manner ; and gradually contracting their outposts, they narrowed the circuit of their operations, and contented themselves by strengthening the fortifications of Chiozza. Nor were they long without perceiving the full necessity of such precaution. Though the brave garrison of the little fort in the *Saline* still defied their summons, it was daily subjected to the observation, and often to the attacks, of three galleys which cruised around it. Pisani armed his flotilla for its relief, and three hundred boats and fifty *ganzaroli* were concealed among the reeds and shallows of the neighbouring banks. From some want of caution, this ambuscade was prematurely detected, and the Genoese hastily plied their oars in flight. Pisani, therefore, finding them too distant for pursuit, boldly directed his course at once upon Chiozza itself, through the shallows which admitted the light draught of his flotilla. Having reached the town, he stormed the suburb, and put the detachment by which it was defended to the sword. Meantime, the galleys which, from their greater burden, had been compelled to make a longer circuit through the deep waters, returned off the port ; and the Venetians, pressed on all sides, both from the town and from the sea, were compelled to retreat, not without loss. Six of their vessels were captured, and Gradenigo, a son-in-law of the doge, was killed. The Genoese might boast that they had repulsed their assailants ; but how great must have been the joy of the Venetians, even under their partial want of success, on finding that they had once more gained the power of assuming the offensive !

As winter advanced, the main body of the Genoese fleet moved up the harbour, in which it was partly dismantled, both for repair and for the refreshment of the crews ; and

here it was soon afterward joined by the squadron which returned from Istria. Three galleys cruising at the entrance of the port were considered amply sufficient for its defence ; for although the growing force of the Venetians excited some inquietude, little anticipation could be entertained of the daring enterprise which they were about to undertake. Contarini, if acting solely on his own judgment, would still have continued to await the return of Carlo Zeno ; but he was urged on both by the enthusiasm of the populace and by the pressure of scarcity in the capital, which would be relieved by the absence of that large portion of her inhabitants about to accompany his fleet, the supplies of which meantime might be procured from the neighbouring coasts. Accordingly, on the 23d of December, the doge, having celebrated high mass at St. Mark's, proceeded in great pomp to the harbour. Martial music enlivened the procession ; but the trumpets were sometimes overpowered by the exulting shouts of the citizens. Before Contarini was displayed the great banner of the republic ; that banner which the seamen were reminded had been unfurled at the memorable discomfiture of Barbarossa ; and the doge, attended by numerous senators, embarked at evening. His fleet consisted of thirty-four galleys, sixty armed barks, and several hundred boats, conveying a large military force ; and the van, of fourteen galleys, under Pisani, towed with it two vast hulks which were essential to his main design. The night was more than usually serene and tranquil, and, at the first daybreak of the morning of the 24th, on the clearing away of a mist, the Genoese perceived, to their alarm and astonishment, that the entrance of the strait of Chiozza was beset by this formidable armament. Feeling secure that no movement of importance would be attempted before the arrival of Zeno, the galleys appointed to observe the mouth of the port appear to have been remiss in their duty and absent from their post. Dearly was this negligence atoned for in the end.

The plan which Pisani meditated was conceived in a masterly spirit. Both in numbers and in equipment, his enemy was greatly his superior ; and his half-trained levies were but ill-matched against the Genoese veterans. It was his obvious policy, therefore, to avoid a battle ; but the imprudence of his adversaries had afforded him an opportunity

of triumph, if by more slow, yet by far more certain means ; and such was their present position that, by promptitude, he might hope to enclose them within toils from which there was little chance of extrication. Chiozza, it will be remembered, standing, like Venice, on a group of small islands surrounded by *Lagune*, and intersected by canals, is approached from the Adriatic by two straits ; that which bears its own name and that of Brondolo. No other issue can be obtained but by ascending the *Lagune* and attempting to penetrate the more distant ports of Malamocco, Lido, or San Erasmo. If, therefore, the channels of Brondolo, Chiozza, and the canal leading to Venice were blockaded, escape would be hopeless. Pisani determined to close these entrances by sinking vessels across them, and then patiently to await, without the *Lagune*, the surrender which time must render inevitable.

The strait of Chiozza was the first in which he commenced his operations ; for one shore which flanked it, that of Pelestrina, was already in his possession. To obtain similar footing on the opposite bank of Brondolo, he threw a body of five thousand men upon that island ; but they were quickly overpowered by a superior force, and beaten back to their ships with great slaughter. Sufficient time, however, had been gained during this attempt to tow the two *cocche* with which he was provided into the channel ; but the ebb of the tide did not permit their support by the remainder of the fleet, and they were attacked at once both from sea and land, burnt to the water's edge, and sunk. The Venetian sailors lamented this calamity ; but Pisani watched, with silent joy, the progress of the flames, and the error which facilitated his design. If the Genoese had occupied and maintained these *cocche*, his enterprise must have failed in its outset ; but when the enemy retired, satisfied by their apparent destruction, the Venetian flotilla again advanced, laden with huge masses of stone and ballast, which they heaped upon the sunken wrecks so as to obstruct the passage of the inlet. This barrier was completed on the following day, when other ships were sunk at intervening points, and the line connecting them was filled up and fortified by a strong row of piles. An outpost also was occupied within the *Lagune*, on the little island Lova.

To throw a similar barricade across the strait of Brondolo

240 BLOCKADE OF THE STRAIT OF BRONDOLO.

dolo was a far more difficult task. The town so named stands little short of two miles from Chiozza,* and the canal which connects them, not exceeding four hundred paces in breadth, is navigable only under the immediate banks, both of which were occupied by the Genoese; yet, in the face of their batteries, and exposed to a terrific fire, Frederico Cornaro penetrated this channel with four ships. As fourteen of the enemy bore down to overwhelm him, Pisani made the combat equal by advancing with ten of his own. The narrowness of the scene of action increased the horrors of the fight; nevertheless, in spite of their great disadvantages, the Venetians persisted till they established themselves in the desired position, and closed the port of Brondolo as effectually as that of Chiozza, leaving open only a narrow passage on the eastern shore, sufficiently broad to admit a single ship. The mouth of the canal leading northward to Venice was similarly dammed; and unless the Genoese could force some one of these passages, they were now deprived of all possibility of escape.

The doge remained at the strait of Chiozza, while Pisani chose for himself the more dangerous station off Brondolo. Much had been done there, but to render these labours permanently effectual, much more was still required. If the Genoese could once master the sunken vessels, they might disengage themselves, and resume their superiority; a change of wind also might drive the blockaders from their anchorage; and even while they maintained it they had to endure the destructive cross-fire of batteries from either shore. The toil was incessant, the loss severe, the service most harassing. Two galleys, relieved at intervals, were always stationed, at imminent risk, in the very jaws of the channel; and upon these was directed the chief fury of the enemy. A fort was built at Fossone, a spot on the south-east of Brondolo, and nearly opposite a convent which formed a strong post of the Genoese; but the engineers employed upon its construction worked within half gunshot of the enemy, and suffered proportionately; for frequently in the course of a single day, five hundred cannon-shots were interchanged between the opposite batteries. Contarini, in order to raise the spirits of his followers, had sworn upon his sword never to return to Venice till the hostile

* Chinazzo, 755.

fleet had surrendered ; but this solemn profession little appeased the hourly-increasing murmurs which ran through his armament. The troops exclaimed against the rigour of the season, and the unparalleled hardships of the service ; till, in spite of the doge's vow, Pisani was compelled to promise that, if the fleet of Zeno, so long and so anxiously expected, did not join him in two days, he would discontinue his enterprise.

Never did a greater stake depend upon the hazard of eight-and-forty hours. It was not only the abandonment of the blockade of Chiozza, and the loss of the toil which they had hitherto expended, that the Venetians had to fear from a retreat. For whither was that retreat to have been directed ? Venice, already suffering under scarcity, could ill readmit a large addition to her distressed population ; nor, if she did admit, could she afford it protection. The Genoese, flushed by success and superior in force, would recover all their former advantages, and, warned by experience, would know better how to profit by them. The glory, nay, perhaps the very existence, of St. Mark must pass away for ever !

With these fearful chances dependent on its course arose the first day of the new year. Pisani, like Columbus, had gaged his all against time, and no less fortunate than that illustrious navigator, he redeemed his stake. A. D. 1380. Every eye was bent upon the sea, when a distant sail studded the horizon ; another and another succeeded, till fourteen vessels were descried. But to what nation did they belong ? To which of the contending parties were they messengers of safety ? Napoleon did not inquire more anxiously whether it was the cannon of Grouchy or of Blucher which pealed in the distance, on the evening of that great day which despoiled him of his crown, than the Venetians sought to ascertain whether the approaching squadron was that of friend or foe. As it came nearer a well-known signal was exhibited, and a shout of transport announced the approach of Carlo Zeno.

The first hours after his arrival were passed on board the galley of the doge, in narrating the adventures of his late voyages, which were of a similar romantic cast to all his former history. Towards the close of 1378, he had been despatched with five galleys by Pisani on a separate service

to observe the coasts of Sicily, and there he intercepted numerous convoys laden with grain for Genoa. Having been joined by another squadron of four vessels, from Crete, which had been equally successful in the Archipelago, and had amassed booty valued at forty-five thousand pieces of gold, he felt himself sufficiently strong to approach the enemy's coast; and at the very moment of the Ligurian triumph at Pola, Carlo Zeno was laying waste the entire *Riviera di Levante*, from the Gulf of Spezzia to Genoa itself. Scattering terror through the Mediterranean, he next made sail for Greece, and there gained new distinction Aug. 6. on the scene of his early fame, by successfully renewing his attempts for the restoration of Calojohannes to the throne usurped by his son. While in the East, his squadron obtained great increase of strength by the junction of occasional stragglers; and after passing the summer in the Levantine seas, giving aid to the King of Cyprus, and grievously harassing the Genoese commerce, he found himself at the head of eighteen galleys at Berytus when information was conveyed to him of the fall of Chiozza, and the consequent great peril of his country. Even if the orders for his return had not been most peremptory, his own wishes would have prompted him to hasten to her relief. Taking with him, therefore, a convoy from Syria, he lost no time in pressing homewards; and on his course, off Rhodes, he encountered the largest and best-built ship of his time, the Genoese *Pickiona*. She is described to have been a three-decker, almost cannon-proof, bearing, exclusively of mariners and passengers, three hundred armed men, and towering as a castle above the waters.* The pursuit was long and arduous, and when overtaken, her great superiority of size enabled her to oppose the combined attack of four galleys, during a whole day and the succeeding night. Many of Zeno's men were slightly hurt, but only one, a rower, was killed. He himself was twice wounded; once in the foot, a second time by an arrow in the left eye. But his ardour was irresistible. The huge vessel took fire during the action, and when this was extinguished, she was at length carried by boarding. The captured treasure was of almost inestimable value; and from

* Era di tre coperte, tutta incorata di fuori via, e pareva a vedere un castello.—Cinianzo.

the ship's papers, her precious lading was valued at five hundred thousand pieces of gold. To each of some Florentine merchants whom he found on board, he presented a hundred ducats for their expenses on landing at Rhodes, and dismissed them after much courteous and honourable treatment. Then taking out the cargo and distributing it through his own ships, he sank the Genoese, which had been too much injured during the action to be conveyed to Italy. Arrived in the Adriatic, he placed his convoy in safety at Parenzo, and passing on to Venice, received orders to join the doge. After weathering a storm which destroyed one of his squadron, he brought to Chiozza a force which terminated all doubt respecting the issue of the contest. Even if the Genoese could disengage themselves from blockade, they would now be encountered, on the open seas by superior numbers; for the Venetians counted in all no less than fifty-two galleys. The supplies poured in were abundant, confidence had revived, and the very name and presence of Carlo Zeno was as a tower of strength to his countrymen.

The post which Zeno selected was that demanding greatest activity: and though not yet recovered from his wounds, he anchored off Brondolo on the evening of his arrival. For the two succeeding days a heavy gale forced the blockading squadron from its station, and the Genoese advanced to attack their works; yet by extreme exertion Zeno, who at one time had been driven, by stress of weather, to the mouth of the port of Chiozza, returned with three galleys to his original moorings, and forced the enemy once more to retire. This success was not obtained without considerable loss. One of his vessels was compelled to surrender; and on the evening of the thirteenth day, the galley which himself commanded, unable to resist the violence of the gale and the strength of the current, drifted under the Genoese forts. The cries of the mariners struggling with the tempest betrayed them to the sentinels, notwithstanding the darkness; and a heavy fire of cannon, and of all other missiles belonging to earlier warfare, was pointed in the supposed direction of the grounded vessel. Its situation was most desperate; but Zeno silenced every proposal of surrender. At length, an expert swimmer, taking a rope in his hand, threw himself into the wintry

sea, in despite of the storm, and buffeted the waves till he gained the main squadron at its anchorage. Zeno, meantime, lightened his vessel, by throwing overboard his guns and ballast: she righted, and was slowly towed out of the enemy's line; but at the moment in which danger seemed at an end, an arrow, shot at random, pierced the throat of the commander. Anxious only for the safety of his men, Zeno disregarded the wound, and continued unconcernedly to give his orders; but in hurrying along the deck, he missed his footing in the darkness, and stumbling through an open hatchway, fell to the bottom of the hold. The sailors who raised him plucked the arrow from his neck, and the gush of blood which instantly followed wellnigh suffocated him. He was lying on his back and speechless; but still retaining entire self-possession, he made signs to the bystanders to change his position, and turn him on his face. This presence of mind saved him; for the blood, now obtaining a free vent, ceased to discharge itself internally. His wound, nevertheless, on first examination, was pronounced mortal; and instant removal to land was advised, as affording the sole, faint, desperate hope of recovery. Zeno, with unshaken firmness, refused to quit his vessel. If he were to die, it should be, he said, on his post: Providence would dispose of his life; but he himself must be the guardian of his honour. The vigour of his constitution prevailed; and in a few weeks he was restored to the service of his country, although the surgeons, anxious, perhaps, for the reputation of their prognostics, continued to affirm that the deviation of a single hair's breadth from the actual position of the wound must have rendered it fatal.

Pisani, meantime, during the absence of his distinguished colleague, continued to press the blockade with undiminished vigour; and his batteries at Fossone were mounted with artillery of the most stupendous caliber. In the infancy of the art of gunnery, the size of the ball to be launched was the chief object to which engineers addressed themselves; and the uncertainty of aim, the infrequency of discharge, and the disproportionate expenditure of gunpowder were disregarded, provided the mass hurled against the enemy was of sufficiently gigantic dimensions. Of two mortars employed by Pisani, one is said to have carried a marble bullet weighing one hundred and forty pounds,—the other,

one of a hundred and ninety-five. They were loaded and fired but once in each day ; and if they struck their mark (a rare occurrence), the effect produced was, as may be imagined, most destructive. Pietro Doria, happily perhaps for his fame, perished by one of these random shots. He was inspecting his works at Brondolo, when the campanile of the town and a long line of rampart Jan. 22. adjoining it were shattered by an enormous cannon-ball, and the ruins overwhelmed both the Genoese commander and his nephew.

Doria was succeeded by Napoleone Grimaldi, who, finding that all chance of escape by the natural channels was desperate, still thought to elude the vigilance of his enemy by a bold expedient. While the Venetians watched the mouths of the two ports, he hoped, by cutting a canal across the island of Brondolo, between both the straits, to penetrate the *aggere* ; perhaps, under cover of darkness, to pass unobserved round the blockading squadron, and once again to threaten Venice, wholly defenceless in the absence of her fleet. Carrara had been able to reinforce him ; and his garrison, notwithstanding its repeated losses, still amounted to thirteen thousand men, partly occupying the town, partly encamped on the island connected with it by a bridge. The projected work was commenced at the back of the convent of Brondolo ; but it was not long before the Venetians perceived its object, and resolved to frustrate it by measures equally daring. Their little army consisted of eight thousand men ; and they had negotiated with Sir John Hawkwood,* the well-known English *condottiere*, whose term of service with the Milanese, by whom he had

* Sir John Hawkwood was one of Edward III.'s most distinguished generals, who, at the close of the successful invasion of France by that prince, organized a free company of English, known in contemporary history, either as *Les Tard-Venus*, or *Alba Comitiva*. A most interesting account of this band may be found in Villani. Hawkwood's name has undergone many amusing transformations. By Froissart he is sometimes called *Haconde*, at others, *Hacton*. The Italians, from a false report that his father was a tailor, called him *Giovanni Aguto*, *Johannes Acutus* (John Sharp), or *Giovanni della Guglia* (John of the Needle), and Villani effects a much more portentous change. "Vanni Aguto," he says, "is called in English, *Kauchouvoe*, i. e. *Falcone di Bosco*, because his mother, being in the pains of child-birth, and finding her labour attended with difficulty, caused herself to be carried into an adjoining grove, and there brought him forth"—an expedient not very closely adapted either to the habits or the climate of England.

been first engaged, had now expired, for the assistance of his bands, so that a powerful reinforcement under his orders was daily expected. But a more lucrative employment, or the intrigues of Carrara, diverted the wandering knight from his engagement; and when he failed at the stipulated rendezvous, the signory, yielding to the immediate urgency of their situation, laid aside for the moment their petty jealousy of native talent, and contrary to their received state maxims, resolved to intrust their land forces to the guidance of Carlo Zeno, whose singular versatility of powers qualified him, notwithstanding his great naval fame, in a still higher degree for military operations. His wounds being now healed, he hastened to fulfil his new duties with alacrity, and the first act of his command exhibited a splendid instance of disinterestedness. The sordid mercenaries of whom his troops chiefly consisted, grasping, avaricious, discontented, and little under subordination, profited by the importance of the crisis, and refused to undertake the fresh service for which they were designed without the distribution of a largess. The military chest, exhausted by long and repeated demands, could furnish no more than five hundred ducats; but Zeno doubled that sum from his private resources, and for a season secured obedience.

In order effectually to counteract the meditated design of the Genoese, it was necessary that they should be driven from the Isle of Brondolo, and shut up within their walls in Chiozza. A combined attack by sea and land was accordingly arranged, and the town and convent of Brondolo were to be assaulted at once from opposite quarters, by the disembarkation of Pisani's mariners, as soon as he perceived Zeno to be engaged. On the 19th of February, before daybreak, Zeno crossed from Pelestrina and the fort of Lova, with 6000 men, and proceeded, in the first instance, to dislodge the troops in Little Chiozza, whom he was unwilling to leave on his rear while he should be employed at Brondolo. The post against which he first directed himself was of considerable strength, though no more than a bell-tower occupied by nineteen men: yet this little handful defended it so courageously, that four alone remained alive after a protracted conflict which lasted during five hours.

The Genoese, either supposing that the chief attack was

intended against Little Chiozza, or that the maintenance of that post was of paramount importance, hastily summoned the garrison of Brondolo to its defence ; and in the mean time prepared for a sortie with the entire force within the walls of Chiozza itself. About 1500 men from Brondolo fell, somewhat by surprise, upon the Venetian rear ; but Zeno, changing his front with inconceivable rapidity, directed his English* bands to charge and overthrow them ; while, by a still more dexterous movement, he placed his main body between the routed column and Brondolo, from which it had advanced. One retreat alone was open, by the bridge of Chiozza ; and thither the fugitives directed their terrified steps, at the moment in which 8000 men were pouring across it to deploy upon the field of battle. The collision of these opposite torrents was destructive to both, as wave broke fiercely upon wave in contrary directions. The panic of the discomfited body speedily communicated itself to that which was advancing : the leading ranks wavered ; those which followed pressed upon them from behind ; their defeated comrades bore down yet more heavily in front, and the dense mass was agitated to and fro, without the power of effective advance or retreat. Ere long the confusion, increased by the narrowness of the passage which they were traversing, became utterly inextricable. Hundreds were trampled under foot ; and to bring the calamity to its height, the bridge gave way beneath the unusual pressure, precipitating, together with its shattered arches, many of the combatants into the channel below, and wholly intercepting the flight of such as remained beyond the chasm. Few in either of these fearful cases escaped death. The heavy armour of such as had fallen into the canal of Sta. Caterina whelmed them beneath the flood ;

* An English captain, Checco, (Cheke ?) is mentioned by Sanuto (708) as serving under Zeno. That hero's biographer, the Bishop of Belluno, latinizes the name as if it were *William Cook*. Zeno is made to address him in a long speech on the field of battle, just before this decisive charge ;—*Accilioque ad se Anglico ductore Guilielmo, quem cognomento Coquum nuncupabant sui, quod inter primos ejus virtutem probitatemque expertus norat, &c.* (240.) Again, in narrating the conspiracy of Roberto di Recanati, the same English knight is mentioned with great distinction. *Guilielmus Britannus, quam Angliam dicimus, trahens originem. Is per strenuas virtutis, celsique animi vir, et probata, fidei.* (260.) In the engagement described above, it is said, *Primi Angli horrendis sublatis vocibus, cursim in hostes irrumunt.* (842.)

and the sword was little likely to spare those who still clung to land.

The carnage was horrible: more than three thousand men fell upon the spot; and of the many who threw down their arms, only six hundred received quarter. Chinazzo, by a graphic touch, acquaints us with the abundant booty left on the field. "Any one," he says, "who wished to have a suit of armour for a ducat, might have bought as many as he pleased." By this success the object of the Venetians was completely gained; for at nightfall the few troops remaining in Brondolo abandoned that post, and taking to their boats, fled to Chiozza; having first destroyed the works of the convent, scuttled the galleys which they were unable to carry off, and then set them on fire. Two of these were rescued from the flames by Pisani, and ten were destroyed. But the terror of defeat ended not here; Chiozza itself, the last hope of Genoa in the *Lagune*, was deserted by more than half its garrison. Before dawn, every channel by which *terra firma* could be gained was choked with fugitives, who for the greater part were natives of Padua; and such was their anxiety for escape that many, unable to procure boats and endeavouring to wade across the marshes, were found in the morning stiffened with cold and frozen to death in the attempt. Ten more galleys, which lay off the mills of Chiozza, were occupied by Pisani without a blow; for their crews as he approached were panic-stricken, and leaping into the sea swam to the neighbouring walls.

Splendid as was this success, its fruits were nearly wrested from the gallant chief through whose skill and valour it had been won, by the evil passions of some among his comrades. Fresh symptoms of insubordination manifested themselves in his camp. The *condottieri* loudly clamoured for double pay; and on the day succeeding their victory, they threatened to withdraw altogether, unless their demand was granted. Once again Zeno had recourse to his personal means, and he employed them in buying over the chief officers to silence the importunity of their men. Nor was this his only difficulty: the jealous spirit of Justiniani, the former admiral, had ill brooked the superior command given to Pisani upon his release from prison; but when his own share of power was still further diminished by the

appointment of Carlo Zeno, he lost all self-control, and openly refused obedience to his orders, till, as a check upon these growing divisions, it became necessary to detach him on a remote service.

A third trial remained for Zeno. To his great energy in the field he united a quality not always found in company with valour—consummate prudence. He plainly saw that further risk of open battle was needless; and that if he could shut out supplies from Chiozza it must eventually fall. For this purpose he contented himself with distributing his troops in posts removed beyond the fire of the ramparts, and framing lines of countervallation to protect himself from surprise. These measures, however well adapted to his great object, were viewed with an evil eye by a large portion of the senators who accompanied the doge on this expedition; for, unused to the privations necessarily attendant upon a naval campaign, and worn by the tedium and the fatigues which they had already endured during two months' confinement on shipboard, they hailed the late victory with delight, as affording them hopes of speedy restoration to the capital and its luxurious repose. A few assaults, as they imagined, would complete the reduction of Chiozza, and terminate their share in a drama ill adapted to their habits. What then was their chagrin and impatience, when they observed the adoption of a system which threatened an indefinite delay, and protracted to an uncertain season their freedom from the shackles in which the rash vow of Contarini had involved them!

Electing themselves into judges of military tactics, they protested against the hazard and fluctuations of a blockade. A thousand accidents, they said, might relieve Chiozza, if time were granted for recovery from the terror of recent defeat. Not to follow up success was to fall into the very error through which Doria had brought upon himself his reverses. To lengthen the campaign was to entangle the republic in expenses which, in her present exhaustion, she could ill support; and to linger till the ardour of troops flushed by victory became extinguished, was to trifle with, and to run counter to fortune. Happily for his country, the courage which animated Zeno was not less of a moral than of a physical character. Knowing that the course which he was pursuing was the best calculated to ensure

success, he persisted in it, unmoved by these idle remonstrances and reproaches ; and he shook aside, with deserved contempt, the foul and false insinuation to which every act of his life afforded a reply, that other qualities were needed in a general besides circumspection.

In pursuance of his design, he strictly forbade any of those personal encounters which, during the inaction of a blockade, were often permitted by the license of war in the middle ages ; when frequently a champion would issue from the lines, and in the hope of distinction, perhaps of booty, would challenge one of the beleaguered garrison to single combat. Many valuable soldiers were killed or disabled in these unproductive contests ; and a force which it was important to preserve entire was thus wasted in detail. Zeno determined to repress this irregular warfare ; and throwing up a redoubt at a spot not far beyond his intrenchments, and at the distance of a bowshot from Chiozza, he proclaimed that the loss of a foot should be the punishment inflicted on any one who transgressed this limit without permission ; and as this severe penalty was rigidly exacted, but a few examples were sufficient to procure obedience.

It was not long before the effect of the blockade was perceived ; for the garrison, straitened for provisions, and already reduced to the most loathsome food,* adopted the cruel but necessary expedient of excluding from their walls every inhabitant incapable of bearing arms ; and the intermediate space between the city and the camp was filled with a helpless throng of aged persons, children, and women.† To the honour of Venetian humanity, it was remembered that these were fellow-countrymen ; and although bread at the moment was selling at four times its usual price in Venice, no hesitation was felt as to the reception of these unhappy and deserted beings ; and they were shipped and transported to the capital.

Many weeks, however, passed away, and notwithstanding their privations, the garrison still continued to hold out. It was known that a fleet, under Maruffo, a Genoese admiral

* *Mangiando ratti, granci et ogni altra cosa immonda.*—Chinazzo, 762.

† Chinazzo says, *le donne e i putti*, and that the soldiers would willingly have followed, if the Genoese government had not threatened to hang every individual who quitted the town. (762.)

of distinction, which had encountered Justiniani and signally defeated him at Manfredonia, was now on its way to the relief of Chiozza ; and in the course of April, in spite of the vigilance of the besiegers, Gasparo Spinola, an officer of great skill and courage, who had been despatched from Genoa to assume the command, succeeded in throwing in a large supply from Padua, by the channels of the Brenta. At length, on the 6th of June, the squadron so much wished for and so long expected by the besieged, hove in sight ; but it was to afford only a brief and delusive hope. The same barriers which the Venetians had framed in the ports of Brondolo and Chiozza to shut in Doria now contributed as effectually to shut out Maruffo. Each entrance was successively reconnoitered by him, and abandoned as inaccessible ; while the wretched garrison, which still continued to cherish hopes of relief, watched his approach from the ramparts with eager eyes, and burst into passionate lamentations on his retreat. The Venetian fleet remained at anchor in perfect safety within the *Lagune* ; and protected by dams and batteries in the straits, which it was not possible for the enemy to force, declined the battle to which it was challenged, in spite of every provocation. The Genoese in vain taunted the “Venetian hogs” (*Veneziani porci*) with cowardice ; they continued immovable. This term of reproach appears to have been unsparingly employed ; for we read, that, on another occasion, when Pisani made a movement which was falsely interpreted into preparation for retreat, the sentinels on the walls of Chiozza shouted, “the hogs are running away” (*i porci scapano*).* Once only was a chance of action afforded, when the Genoese admiral took up his position off Fossone, in order to intercept the communications with Ferrara. A convoy was expected from that city, and Pisani, to ensure its passage, bore out of the port with twenty-five sail, apparently prepared for combat. Having stood off to the open sea, he allured Maruffo into pursuit ; and after sufficient time had been afforded for the reception of the convoy, he baffled his enemy by skilful manoeuvring, and returned again to his anchorage unmolested.

Before the arrival of Maruffo’s fleet a proposition had

* Gattaro, 264.

already been offered for surrender, and, on condition of not being detained prisoners, the Genoese tendered the evacuation of Chiozza. The reply was a stern negative ; and even when the near approach of succour was known, Contarini gave evident proof of the light regard which he attached to the presence of his new enemy, by issuing a proclamation, requiring each individual in the garrison who hoped for safety to quit Chiozza, and present himself on a fixed day at the gates of the public prison in Venice. This insult was received indignantly ; and in lieu of submitting to disgrace so intolerable the garrison resolved on one last, desperate attempt to penetrate the Venetian lines, and cut their way to the squadron of Maruffo. All their regular craft had been destroyed during the blockade ; but having found means of communicating their design to the admiral, they hastily constructed a rude flotilla of boats and rafts from the timber of houses demolished for the sake of that material, and from various articles of wooden furniture.* One hundred of these frail and shapeless floats, each provided with ten oars, received the whole garrison ; and at the moment of their embarkation, Maruffo appeared off the barricades, and commenced a brisk attack upon them. All chance of success depended upon surprise ; but the signals between the city and the fleet had not passed unnoticed ; Pisani easily defended the barriers with a comparatively small force ; and directing his chief efforts against the barks which were crossing the *Lagune*, he ran down more than half of them, and compelled the remainder to flight. The loss of the enemy was severe ; for to increase their confusion, the troops of Zeno charged into the shallows and put to the sword the half-drowned wretches who still clung to their rafts, although shattered, sinking, and dispersed.

Famine in its utmost horrors now pressed upon the devoted garrison, and Spinola abandoning all hope retired to *terra firma*, and left the ungrateful task of capitulation to his lieutenant. The disaffected temper which had, more than once, been exhibited by the mercenaries in the pay of Venice was known or suspected by the besieged ; and thinking to profit by the avarice and insubordination of the

* *Di solari, di casse e di letticerie ed altre legname molto pulite.*—Chinazzo.

condottieri, they addressed their proposals, in the first instance, to them, not either to Zeno or to Contarini. Before their deputies approached the camp, all the prisoners taken during the siege were freely released and dismissed, partly in hope of conciliation, partly from inability to feed them ; and well knowing that no offer was likely to receive admission by the rapacious marauders to whom they now directed themselves, if it implied the slightest diminution of booty, the garrison tendered their arms, stores, and treasure, with the possession of the town, to the free companies, provided they would guaranty their personal freedom, and protection from the Venetians. The insidious proposal was eagerly received ; and but for the prompt and dexterous exertions of Zeno, the fruits of her long toil might have been lost to Venice at the very moment of their full ripeness. He represented to his troops that no gain could result to them by the grant of such terms ; and that to accede to stipulations made by those who were without power to resist, was gratuitously to surrender a prize already within their grasp. It was his intention, he said, to abandon the town to them for plunder : all the mercenaries within it should fall to their share as prisoners ; and the doge required nothing more than the bare walls of Chiozza, and such Genoese, Paduans, Dalmatians, and Greeks, as, being trained to the marine, might be employed at the oar.

These arguments prevailed with the majority, and one only of the leaders refused assent, Roberto di Recanati, who appears to have been an officer of distinction, commanding one hundred lances and four hundred infantry. Engaged in secret communication with the enemy, and bribed by them with a promise of forty thousand ducats to excite cabals in the camp, he spread at one time a report that it was Zeno's intention not to deliver up Chiozza to be pillaged ; at another, he revived a cry for double pay ; and in the end, he did not hesitate to propose that his men should desert the banners under which they were now engaged, and embrace the cause of Genoa. Some few were base and rash enough to listen to the suggestion : when Zeno, learning the agitation which prevailed, threw himself, sword in hand, among the mutineers ; and now by promises, now by threats, succeeded in calming the tumult. Order, however, was not restored, until he had solemnly pledged himself to

grant a month's additional pay as a gratuity, and to abandon Chiozza to their rapine for a period of three days. Recanati, thus far disappointed in his perfidious designs, sought their achievement by a yet blacker crime, and undertook the assassination of Zeno and his chief officers. The proofs were manifest; and Zeno, having submitted them, on the following night, to a council of war, but a few hours before the treachery was to have been executed, appealed to the honour of his captains. With one voice they indignantly disclaimed all participation in, all knowledge of the foul conspiracy; and eagerly demanded the instant punishment of the traitor. Recanati was seized; but his followers, unacquainted with his guilt and deceived by his crafty representations, surrounded the general's tent, and fiercely clamoured for the release of the prisoner. When Zeno presented himself before them, their blind fury was displayed in acts of the most daring violence. Closing round, with frightful outcries, they menaced him with immediate death; and a sword was raised by some unknown hand, which, but for the good proof of his helmet, would have descended fatally. The succour of his officers and of some battalions which still preserved better discipline, rescued him from this new peril; and the mutiny was terminated by the execution of its chief author, who was conveyed to Venice, where he expiated his treason between the Red Columns.

The garrison, frustrated in this last criminal hope, no longer dared to supplicate for more than their lives. They pleaded that the international wars had hitherto been waged without proceeding to the ferocity of extermination; that prisoners had been mutually ransomed or exchanged, and, latterly, had been released by themselves without conditions; that in their own recent capture of Chiozza, few acts of violence had been perpetrated at all, and none by authority; that if their defence had been obstinately protracted, it was, nevertheless, such as the laws of war amply justified; such as, in a generous enemy, would excite applause rather than condemnation. Finally, that now, vanquished, prostrate, and unarmed, they threw themselves upon the clemency of Venice, trusting to prayers and tears for that immunity which they had failed to gain by arms. The reply to their petitions was ambiguous, and couched in terms little calculated to inspire hope. Chains, they were told, were their

immediate portion; concerning their life or death, the signory would decide hereafter. That which they still had to do must be done quickly! Even under the slight chance of mercy thus implied, surrender appeared preferable to the certainty of perishing yet more slowly and more cruelly by hunger, for bread had not passed their lips for many days. The messengers returned silently and despondingly to the walls; a flag was raised on the summit of a lofty tower, as a signal to Maruffo, who, in obedience to it, bore June 22. to land; when it was suddenly lowered, and the admiral, understanding the intended announcement, retired to Fossone. The gates were opened, the garrison surrendered at discretion, and the besiegers rushed in to pillage a city, which Venice, if she had retained the power, would have saved from spoliation, as a peculiar of the *Dogado*. Nineteen galleys and about four thousand three hundred prisoners were the sad wreck of the gallant armament which had occupied Chiozza for ten months, and had defended it for seven. After the distribution of the spoil and the disbandment of the mercenaries, the doge with his triumphant host re-entered Venice in the Bucentaur, on the 1st of July,* leaving Chiozza under the administration of a *podesta*.

The war lingered on for nearly a year after the close of this memorable siege; but during the remainder of its course we shall look in vain for the adventurous and romantic character, the rapid and extraordinary fluctuations which have heretofore marked its events. Pisani died on shipboard, off the coast of Puglia, before its conclusion; and his remains, having been embalmed, were conveyed to Venice, for interment in the church of St. Antonio. The announcement of his death was received with universal mourning; for so beloved was this great captain, that each citizen appeared to have lost in him a friend; and the remembrance of his conciliating gentleness, his unblemished integrity, his patience under injury, and his generous forgetfulness of wrong, endeared him to the remembrance of his countrymen, not less than his matchless bravery and

* Galeazzo Gataro (361), in opposition to every other authority, accuses Contarini of perjury, and states, that in violation of his solemn oath, he returned to Venice on the 21st of April.

his unexampled services, which had so largely contributed to enhance their national glory.

The general voice proclaimed Zeno his successor; and, as if the mantle of Pisani was to convey his fortunes as well as his office to its inheritor, scarcely was the new possessor invested with it before upon him also fell the ingratitude of his country. His station was fixed off Zara. That city, recently and strongly fortified, and defended by a numerous and well-appointed garrison, forbade all hope of successful assault; and Maruffo, safe in its harbour and under its guns, obstinately refused every provocation to battle. Zeno's sole resource was to watch his immovable enemy, and by cruising round the port, at least to prevent his escape. Such a service, at all times vexatious, Oct. was now rendered far more than usually so, by the lateness of the season, the consequent boisterousness of the weather, and, above all, by deficiency of equipment. Zeno's squadron, which had been hastily despatched on an especial service, was inadequately provisioned for a tedious blockade; winter had commenced early, and some rude storms had shattered and dispersed the convoys upon which Zeno depended for revictualling his exhausted fleet; bread was wholly wanting, and during fifteen days the mariners were supported on scanty rations of salted meat—a food which, owing to the comparative shortness of mediæval voyages, had not yet become the staple provision of a sailor's table. Their sufferings were so acute, that little surprise could be felt at the murmurs raised by the crews; yet it was not till he became doubtful of their obedience that Zeno wrote home, expressing the necessity of a recall. Venice herself, at the moment, was enduring almost equal privation, for the rage of war or the deficiency of harvest had rendered scarcity general through the north of Italy. Unable to furnish supplies to the fleet abroad, and equally unable to support an increased population should it return home, the signory did no more than order a change in the scene of operations. Zeno was instructed to quit the blockade of Zara, and to commence the siege of Marano, a town situated in the marshes at the embouchure of the Tagliamento, and furnishing a useful outpost against the territory of the Patriarch of Aquileia. Few places were more difficult of access, or more strongly protected by nature; it was approached

from the sea by a narrow channel, two leagues in length, and nowhere of greater depth than would admit a vessel of the lightest draught ; this single inlet was moreover dry at low water. Zeno carefully reconnoitred the position ; and, convinced of its impracticability, he generously determined to encounter the whole weight of the senate's wrath in his own person, rather than to sacrifice the lives intrusted to him in an assault which he perceived must be hopeless ; and accordingly he set sail for Venice.

The council learned his arrival with astonishment and indignation ; forbade his entrance within the *Lagune*, on pain of death ; and deputed two of their body to command him to await further orders on the coast of Dalmatia. Zeno reminded them of the hazards of the season, and persisted in his demand for admission to the harbour : yet they consumed three days in angry deliberation ; and but for the deep murmurs of the seamen, which found a ready echo from the populace of the capital, they would have persevered in refusal. At length Zeno obtained leave to enter ; and scarcely had he gained his moorings, when, as if for the express confirmation of his foresight, a tempest so violent arose, that had the fleet been still excluded, not a ship would have escaped destruction. On landing, the admiral and his principal officers were introduced to the hall of the council, where his manly and forcible statements were answered by insults, by reproaches, and even by threats. Zeno listened for the most part in proud or temperate silence, and but once offered a reply. When his greeting of welcome was tauntingly answered by "You are welcome as you deserve,"—"If as we deserve," he said, "then are we assuredly welcome."* Not so one of his captains ; who, touched by the injustice offered to his chief, boldly defended him. "If there be any blame," he said, "it belongs to the government, which has issued inconsiderate orders ; not to the wiser officer who has demurred obeying them." The fury of the council at this honest but unseasonable sally forgot all bounds ; the criminals, as they were termed, were ordered to withdraw ; a vehement and tumultuous debate ensued ; and a majority of voices pronounced for imprisonment. Already was this ill-judged and inequitable vote more than suspected by the

* "Eos ita venire ut digni forent." "Bene projecto venimus si ut digni sumus venimus."—*Vita C. Zeno*, apud Muratori, xix. 354.

anxious throng assembled round the palace-gates, and signs not to be mistaken announced the storm about to burst upon the devoted council ; when Zeno, desirous to calm the popular excitation, by showing that he was still free, re-entered their hall of audience, unsummoned. Addressing the counsellors, he expressed conviction that the presence of a stranger was unfitting during their deliberations, and that he would therefore withdraw, and return whenever they should send for him. The council, yet more enraged at this frank exercise of private judgment, which they professed to consider as a fresh act of disobedience, haughtily commanded him to remain, and showed indications of employing force if he refused. No longer able to control his just impatience, he indignantly demanded whether they wished that day should terminate the existence of the republic. "I look through your benches," he exclaimed, "without being able to recognise a single individual among you who has shed one drop of blood for his country. Turn to these and to myself, on the other hand : We have fought ; We have conquered ; We have borne the heat and burden of war. Our fortunes, our limbs, our lives have been devoted for your protection : and in return for the countless forms of death which we have encountered, as a recompence for our toils, wounds, and perils, we are now menaced with chains and dungeons. Never, never let the republic, saved by *our* activity, be dishonoured by *your* ingratitude ! Debate now, and decide according to *your* pleasure !" With these words, in spite of the violent exclamations of the oligarchs, he quitted the assembly ; crossed, amid the applauses of the thousands who filled the piazza, to St. Mark's ; offered his devotions at one of the altars, and retired to his own house.

The government had placed itself in a false position. To punish Zeno, if it regarded its own existence, was manifestly impossible ; wholly to pass over his disobedience was to surrender its authority ; and accordingly, as a means of extrication from this embarrassment, fresh orders for the siege of Marano were issued ; but instead of the galleys hitherto destined for the service, a flotilla of light boats was equipped and launched. Zeno's opinion of the folly of the project still remained unchanged : nevertheless, having offered strong remonstrances, which proved ineffectual, he did not hesitate

to resume the command thus forced upon him. His boats entered the canal of Marano with the tide, and the troops were disembarked, and pressed a long and hazardous assault upon the town. While animating them at the foot of the ditch, Zeno was wounded by a stone discharged from the walls, and fell senseless ; yet on his recovery he again placed himself at the head of a storming column. But the tide by this time had retreated and borne with it his boats ; the loss of the Venetians had been severe ; the patriarch was advancing with fresh troops, and it was not without great peril and difficulty that Zeno retreated through the marshes, and regained his flotilla. The senate had obtained his obedience, and, perhaps, it did not lament his defeat.

All parties were now fatigued with a war in which all had been losers. On the continent, Treviso still held out for Venice ; but it was blockaded by an over-powering force, and sorely distressed by famine. Stores, men, and treasure were equally wanting in the capital ; and the republic, conscious of her incapacity to relieve or to retain her possessions in the March, wisely resolved to profit to the utmost by their abandonment. The bitter enmity which Carrara, the author of the present contest, had exhibited, his ambitious temper, his crafty policy, and the close vicinity of his hereditary dominions rendered him the most dangerous power under which the Trevisano could pass ; and in ceding this territory, the object of so much pride during more than forty years' sway, the signory felt that not only their shame but their loss also would be more than doubled, if these contributed to the aggrandizement of the Lord of Padua. The Duke of Austria was a prince of far greater power ; and though to invite him as a neighbour to their very borders was a step not unattended with danger, yet it was a danger in every way far inferior to that which they anticipated from Carrara. The Austrian hereditary states were remote ; and it was possible that Leopold, while he averted the progress of their most inveterate foe, might never be able firmly to establish his own sway in Italy. To him, therefore, in the first instance, the cession of the Trevisano was offered ; and when, having eagerly accepted the proposal, he marched ten thousand men to take possession of May.

his new territory, the Venetians despatched an embassy of congratulation on his acquirement of a dominion virtually wrested from themselves. We shall perceive that the wiles of Carrara rendered this sovereignty but nominal, and even in name but short-lived. The presence of an Austrian force to dispute a territory which had almost become his own by right of conquest could not but alarm him; and the secession of the King of Hungary from any active share in the league which he had formed contributed to awaken an anxious desire for peace. At this juncture, Amadeus VI., Count of Savoy, jointly with the republic of Florence, proposed a mediation between the contending parties, and a congress was assembled at Turin. The treaty was finally concluded on the 8th of August, on the following basis: That each republic should retain its conquests, excepting those within the Gulf of Venice, which Genoa should restore: that each should renounce its commerce at the mouth of the Don: that Tenedos should be evacuated by the Venetians, and surrendered to the occupation of the Duke of Savoy, who at the close of two years should demolish its fortifications, before its ultimate allotment was decided; each republic agreeing to place one hundred thousand crowns in the hands of Florence, as a security for the fulfilment of this condition: that Carrara should restore to Venice Cavanzero and Moranzeno, and raze all his newly constructed forts on the frontiers of the *Dogado*: that he should receive in return the Castle of Curno, and be released from all demands of arrears conceived to be owing before the war. The boundary line between the Venetian and Paduan territories was to be regulated by arbitrators appointed by the two mediating powers.

There remains only the pleasing task of recording the honourable discharge of the promises which the Venetian government had held out as encouragements to patriotism during this memorable contest. Thirty families were ennobled; and the list which is preserved to us of the names and conditions of the persons elevated proves beyond doubt the integrity of the electors. At the head is placed Giacopo de' Cavalli, the Veronese, who had commanded the army of the republic; and among the others were found the grand chancellor of Venice, two noble Candiates, a banker, five ordinary tradesmen, six who bore the simple

style of citizens, one called a merchant, five to whose names no title is appended, and eight artisans. No more illustrious source of nobility can be imagined ; and it is to be wished that all the families thus founded had continued to exist while the republic itself endured. But the Abbé Laugier, who was well acquainted with the society and the internal constitution of Venice, and who wrote not quite four centuries after the occurrence of the events which we have been relating, tells us, that at that moment scarcely seven, or at the utmost eight representatives survived of the nobles of the Genoese war,—*I NOSILI DELLA GUERRA DI GENOA.*

CHAPTER IX.

FROM A. D. 1382 to A. D. 1402.

Acquisition of the Trevisano by Carrara—Antonio della Scala—Early History of Giovanni Galeazzo Visconti—His Alliance with Venice against Carrara—Abdication of Francesco Vecchio—Surrender of Padua by Francesco Novello—He is treacherously detained Prisoner—Jealousy between Venice and Milan—Escape of Francesco Novello—His romantic Adventures—He recovers Padua—His magnificent Entertainment at Venice—Death of Francesco Vecchio—Affairs of the East—Bajazet—New Crusade—Fatal Battle of Nicopolis—Erection of Milan into a Dutchy—Gonzaga of Mantua—Domestic Events in Venice—Visit of the Emperor Robert—Death of Giovanni Galeazzo Visconti.

DOGES.

A. D.

| | | |
|-------|--------|-------------------|
| | | ANDREA CONTARINI. |
| 1382. | LXIII. | MICHAEL MOROSINI. |
| | — | — |
| | LXIV. | ANTONIO VENIERO. |
| 1400. | LXV. | MICHAEL STENO. |

THE close of the great struggle which we have been relating left each of the combatants almost equally exhausted ; both had suffered deeply under defeat ; neither had been a permanent gainer by victory. The short occupation of Chiozza had cost the Genoese a fleet and an

army. The purchase of peace by the Venetians, even after their final success, was not attained at a less price than the cession of Tenedos, and of the sole province which they possessed on *terra firma*. Nevertheless, from the moment of the treaty of Turin, we shall perceive Genoa, though her power was apparently increased by it, rapidly verging to decline; while Venice retrieved her losses, extended her commerce, and maintained her independent sovereignty unshaken.

Contarini, worn by age and the toils of a laborious campaign, survived but a few months after the signature of peace; and when Carlo Zeno was proposed as his successor, the full spirit of Venetian policy manifested itself in his rejection. It was not on account of his virtues, his talents, or his glory that the republic wished to select her prince. On the contrary, those qualities formed so many barriers against the elevation of their possessor; and if Zeno had been less brave, less noble-minded, and less generous, he might, perhaps, have attained the unenviable distinction of the ducal bonnet. The choice of the electors

A.D. 1382. was directed to Michael Morosini, a noble of illustrious birth, derived from a stock which, coeval with the republic itself, had produced the conqueror of Tyre, given a queen to Hungary, and more than one doge to Venice. The brilliancy of this descent was tarnished in the present chief representative of the family by the most base and grovelling avarice: for at that moment in the recent war at which all other Venetians were devoting their whole fortunes to the service of the state, Morosini sought in the distresses of his country an opening for his own private enrichment; and employed his ducats, not in the assistance of the national wants, but in speculating upon houses which were brought to market at a price far beneath their real value, and which, upon the return of peace, ensured the purchaser a fourfold profit. "What matters the fall of Venice to me, so as I fall not together with her!" was his selfish and sordid reply to some one who expressed surprise at the transaction. His reign was but of short duration. The plague swept twenty thousand souls from the *Lagune*, and among them perished Morosini, after he had enjoyed the dogeship not more than four months.

Before the election of Antonio Veniero, Carrara had suc-

ceeded in his views upon the Trevisano, after employing every artifice which the subtlety of an experienced diplomatist could suggest to delay its occupation by the troops of Leopold. Whenever they presented themselves before any town of the province, they were amused by promises and protestations ; countless difficulties on points of form were raised as to immediate surrender ; gold was lavished on the Austrian commanders ; the Paduan garrisons were strengthened ; and in order to gain yet further time, negotiations were sedulously opened with the duke. Leopold was ill prepared to win by arms possession of the territory which had been peaceably ceded to him ; for other cares, nearer home, distracted his attention and his forces. His treasury was exhausted ; and he gladly, therefore, listened to the offer of 80,000 ducats made by Carrara, for a province far from his hereditary states, and in which he felt little hope of permanently establishing himself.

Venice was deeply mortified at this failure of a project which had been considered a master-stroke of policy, and another neighbouring power was no less displeased with this extension of the dominions of Carrara. Antonio della Scala, a bastard of the noble house whose name he bore, had won his way to the throne of Verona by the assassination of his brother ; and he now viewed with a suspicious eye the increasing ascendency of Padua. The murder of his brother was not the only crime charged against him ; for in order to exterminate a family which by its pretensions might endanger his throne, he had put to a death of horrible torture the mistress and children of his first victim, falsely imputing to them the unnatural deed of blood which himself had committed. Carrara openly testified his abhorrence of this complicated wickedness ; and personal resentment on that account, no less than ambition, stimulated Della Scala, to project the overthrow of the Lord of Padua. The promise of a tempting subsidy secured his alliance with Venice ; and he concluded a secret treaty, by which, in consideration of the receipt of 25,000 florins per month, he agreed to employ his whole forces in the proposed war, to strip Carrara of his dominions, and to permit the reoccupation of the Trevisano by the Venetians.

The arms of Della Scala were unsuccessful, and he was twice signally defeated, with grievous loss, at Brentella and

at Castelnaro.* Venice, during these transactions, had supported him, not by troops but by subsidies. Yet, although she forbore from appearing openly in the field, the mystery of her alliance was soon penetrated by Carrara, who gained by his bribes the assistance of an *avvogadore* and of a member of the XL., and thus obtained full revelation of the secrets of the great council. The discovery of this intrigue justly consigned the traitors to the executioner; and at the same time compelled the Lord of Padua to strengthen himself against the expected vengeance of the republic. For this purpose he looked around among the neighbouring princes for an ally sufficiently powerful to ensure his safety; and from the superior advantages which one, more especially, appeared to offer, it was not probable that his choice would long remain undecided.

The new actor who now appeared upon the political theatre not a little increased the intricacy of its drama; and though during the first scenes he espoused the interests of Carrara, in the catastrophe he contributed mainly to the events which prepared his fall. Towards the close of the preceding century, the family of Visconti had established itself in the sovereignty of Milan, which it had since maintained, at first, owing to the great qualities of those by whom it was swayed, and latterly, by their dissimulation and fearlessness of crime. Giovanni Galeazzo Visconti, by a marriage with a daughter of France, claimed the title of Comte de Vertù, a small fief in Champagne; and on the death of his father in 1378, he succeeded to the government of a moiety of Lombardy, and fixed his court at Pavia. His uncle, Bernabo, with whom he shared the sceptre, resided at Milan, and from an anxiety to increase the portions of his children by the heritage of his nephew, he organized a series of conspiracies against his person and power, which Galeazzo by his wariness quietly frustrated, without betraying that he had discovered them. By an affectation of devotion, Galeazzo succeeded in concealing from his uncle both his resentment and his intentions of revenge: he appeared in public attended by ecclesiastics; a rosary was

* Galeazzo Gataro, apud Muratori, xvii. 579. In the frequent use of Gataro made in the remainder of this chapter a translation by Mr. David Syme (Edinburgh, 1880) has been much employed. Our references are to the original.

never absent from his hands ; his days were employed in pilgrimages, his nights in penance. The suspicions of Bernabo, if indeed he ever entertained any, were lulled to rest by this semblance of superstitious weakness ; and he heard, without apprehension, that his nephew was approaching Milan, on a visit to a chapel of the Virgin near the Lago Maggiore, though his progress was accompanied by an escort of more than customary numbers. Part, indeed, of Galeazzo's policy had been to display cowardice as well as superstition ; and under the pretext of dread of assassination, he had surrounded himself with a powerful body-guard. With a train of two thousand horse, he now moved on towards the capital of Lombardy, and Bernabo, with his two eldest sons and a few attendants of state, rode out to salute him, intimating, with a smile, to those who cautioned him, that his nephew was too much of a saint to meditate treachery. Scarcely, however, had the first greetings passed, when Galeazzo made a sign to Giacopo dal Verme and others of his confidential followers, who surrounded Bernabo, seized the bridle of his mule, cut his sword from his belt, and hurried him with his sons to prison. His oppression had weaned from him the affection of his subjects, and his allies regarded his fall with indifference : no attempt, therefore, was made for his deliverance during a captivity of seven months ; in the course of which the strength of his constitution or of his antidotes resisted frequent attempts which were made to despatch him by poison, till, at length, in the close of 1385, he became its victim. Galeazzo, having peaceably united both divisions of Lombardy under his single rule, threw aside the mask of religion which he had hitherto successfully worn, and abandoned himself to projects of ambition.

The troubled condition of the states which bordered upon his own dominions afforded rich promise of gain to Visconti ; and by fomenting the differences between Padua and Verona, he reasonably hoped to make both of them his prey. After the defeat of Della Scala at Brentella, he had secretly offered his alliance, at the same moment, to each of the contending parties ; and although at the time each had avoided the snare, nevertheless Carrara, now flushed by his second victory, thought such succour alone was wanting to complete the total subjugation of his enemy. A treaty was

accordingly concluded for the partition of Della Scala's dominions, by which Galeazzo was to retain Verona, and Vicenza was to fall to Carrara. The conquest was A. D. 1387. readily effected; but Visconti, once in possession of both cities, refused to transfer the stipulated portion to his ally.

Della Scala, ruined by these losses, found an asylum in Venice, and in exchange for his principality, received the empty honour of enrolment in her golden book. Visconti was the sole gainer by his overthrow, which he considered only as a prelude to yet more important successes. In order to secure his ulterior objects, he entered into secret negotiations with Venice, the object of which was the spoliation of his Paduan ally; and when Carrara implored the aid of the signory to compel Visconti to the fulfilment of the conditions of his treaty, he was answered by a cold refusal, speedily succeeded by open hostilities. The republic, indeed, had little interest in the aggrandizement of either of these dangerous neighbours, but, in her choice of alliance, a connexion with Visconti appeared far the most profitable of the two. His territories were sufficiently remote from the *Lagune* to render them difficult of conquest in case of war, while those of Carrara lay immediately at hand, and from his comparative weakness seemed of easier attainment. It was agreed that the Trevisano should revert to Venice, and that certain forts on the borders of the *Lagune*, which disquieted her, should be destroyed; in return for which benefits she engaged to furnish a small contingent. Visconti, upon whom it was manifest that the chief military burden was to fall, sought more for the concurrence of the republic in designs which she might otherwise impede, than for her active co-operation, and he willingly provided the requisite material. As a pledge of his fidelity, and an assurance that he was not about to repeat towards Venice a fraud similar to that which he had recently practised on the Lord of Padua, he solicited that Carlo Zeno might be allowed to enter his service, and he confided to him the government of Milan.

It was in June, 1388, that the unfortunate Francesco Vecchio, surrounded by traitors in his cabinet, and A. D. 1388. rejected by every foreign power to which he applied for aid, summoned his council and laid before it the hopelessness of his affairs. He was hemmed in, he said,

between the arms of Lombardy and Venice. The Marquis d'Este, the Lord of Mantua, and the city Udino had coalesced with his yet mightier enemies. The Marquis of Ferrara refused a passage through his dominions to any succours which Bologna, Florenee, or Rome might be prevailed upon to send him. The emperor had been bought by Visconti; the Dukes of Austria and Bavaria demanded a larger subsidy than his exhausted treasury could furnish; and, finally, discontent and disaffection pervaded every class of his own subjects. This melancholy picture was by no means overcharged, and long and tumultuous debates succeeded its representation; for scarcely a voice in the council was unbribed by Visconti. Some clamoured for the deposition of Francesco Vecchio, and an immediate surrender to Milan; others proposed that he should be delivered up to the Venetians; a third party, and it was supported by the populace, demanded his abdication, and the appointment of his son in his stead. Nor were there wanting those who were sufficiently frontless to propose violent measures to the young prince; to urge him to throw his aged father into prison, and to seize upon his authority. Such a step, they assured him, would conciliate popularity at home, and at the same time would satisfy both the Venetians and Galeazzo, who were chiefly animated by personal enmity to his father. Francesco Novello, who, in trying moments, appears never to have been wanting in generosity, in affection, or in courage, indignantly spurned this unnatural proposal, and avowed that he would endure any extremity of fortune rather than fail in duty to his parent.

After two days passed in hot contentions among the Paduan leaders, in feebleness and vacillation by the elder Carrara, and in loud expressions of disgust and sedition by the populace, who believed that they were about to be sold, like cattle, to Venice or to Milan, the aged prince agreed to the proposed abdication. The citizens were assembled, and proceeded, according to ancient forms in the days of Paduan freedom, to elect four *anziani*, a *gonfaloniere* of justice, and a syndic. Before this tribunal the reasons which induced Francesco Vecchio to resign his authority were explained, and his son was recommended as his most fitting successor. The baton, the gonfalon, the book of statutes, and other ensigns of power were deposited in the

hands of the magistrates ; and the *gonfaloniere*, having addressed a few laudatory words to the young prince, confirmed his investiture by the presentation of these insignia, and, in the name of the whole people, proclaimed him Captain and Lord of Padua. On the following day, the 30th of June, the abdicated prince retired to Treviso, of which city he had retained to himself the sovereignty.

On the morrow of his accession, Francesco Novello received two trumpets of defiance from the allied camps. He replied to Visconti by informing him of the recent revolution ; adding, that the defiance, therefore, could not be intended for him, and respectfully commanding himself to his favour and protection. To Venice, he complained of the infraction of an alliance of thirty years, and professed his desire for peace with all men, especially with their republic. But the change of masters in Padua had produced no change of hostile sentiments in the coalition formed against her independence. The signory, without deigning an answer, commanded the envey immediately to quit their city ; and Visconti sarcastically expressed his opinion that the policy of the Paduan lords would still remain unaltered, by the application of one of those expressive proverbs in which Italy abounds, “ Sons of cats are fond of mice !”

Few events of interest marked the ensuing campaign. The allies advanced under Giacomo dal Verme with uninterrupted success ; for treason was rife in the camp as well as in the councils of their foe. Carrara was not wanting to himself either in the field or in his capital ; but the perfidy of his troops rendered his own bravery unavailing, and the disaffection of his subjects, heightened by their sufferings and their fears, was not to be conciliated by the lavish sacrifices which he made in surrendering his private funds for the payment of debts contracted by his father. By November all was lost ; Padua was closely beleaguered, the surrounding country pillaged and laid waste. The murmurs of the citizens were but a prelude to more open denunciations by the council, and Carrara was at length informed that his opposition would be vain, his reclamation unheeded, and that the city would be surrendered to Visconti. During the brief communication with his family, he was consoled and supported by the noble spirit of his lady, Madonna Taddea, a daughter not unworthy of the illustrious house

of Este, from which she sprang. "I think, my lord," said this high-minded princess, when her opinion was asked, "that it is a happier and a better thing to die free than to live in bondage, and therefore I approve of your setting forth, before these base counsellors can betray us!" These words, in unison with his own feelings, confirmed him in adopting the design which he had himself projected; and having ascertained from Giacomo dal Verme that he had full authority to open a treaty, he surrendered to him the city and castle of Padua. The conditions stipulated that Carrara, with his whole family, and a retinue of two hundred persons, should receive a safe-conduct to visit Pavia, and to return thence if he so pleased. There it was his hope to conclude peace with Visconti; but if he failed, his capital, which he now ceded, was to be restored. Dal Verme swore on the sacrament to observe these terms inviolably.

As Carrara quitted his palace, the populace, instigated by the council, rushed in and plundered it. At the city gate he met Dal Verme, who, as an evil augury for his fidelity, took military possession of the surrendered posts, with more than six times the numbers which had been arranged by the treaty. As the fallen prince advanced on his route, almost every town was in revolt; and at Moncelise, and at Este, he was received with insulting cries of *Viva il Conte di Virtù!* At Verona and at Brescia, on the other hand, he was greeted with respect; and in the former he left his lady while he proceeded to Milan. There also he was honourably entertained, and his suspicions were not awakened till, by repeated excuses, Visconti deferred the promised conference at Pavia, and at length denied the Lady Taddea permission to rejoin her husband. "Now is my safe-conduct broken indeed!" was Carrara's exclamation, when he learned this bitter refusal.

Meantime, similar frauds had been practised to secure the person of the elder Carrara at Treviso. He was invited to visit Galeazzo at Pavia, and Francesco Novella was unwillingly compelled to urge his adoption of this perilous step. A messenger whom he secretly despatched to warn his father of his danger, and of the compulsion under which himself had acted, proved treacherous, and this circumstance combined with the aged prince's defenceless situation to hurry him to his ruin. The poor old man, as Gataro vividly describes the

melancholy scene,* sat with clasped hands, listening to the harangues of the envoys. When they were concluded, he made a strong effort to clear his countenance, and steadfastly regarding them in his accustomed grave and dignified manner, he replied, that in so far as he could see, there was no alternative. He then demanded a safe-conduct, and the chief envoy, Spineta, swore to observe its conditions ; as, we are told, he would have sworn to observe any others which might have been proposed. Treviso received a Milanese garrison, and Carrara proceeded in mournful cavalcade to Verona, where, on alighting from his carriage, he was greeted by his daughter-in-law, Madonna Taddea, who threw herself at his feet, and, weeping bitterly, embraced his knees. The old man gently raised her ; first kissed the lady herself with tears in his eyes, and then her children—a scene which the spectators did not regard without deep emotion. When, on the morrow, he spoke of prosecuting his journey to Pavia, he was informed that he could not be permitted to depart till the receipt of further orders from Visconti, and he then, for the first time, became sensible of his captivity. He remained at Verona till the commencement of the following year, when he was transferred to Cremona.

The Trevisano was thus wrested from Carrara, but it was not without some difficulty that it was recovered by Venice, for the Milanese near its capital were much superior in force to their allies ; and Visconti endeavoured to profit by this numerical advantage. But the republic was strong in partisans within the walls ; and when Dal Verme entered with his troops and raised the standard of Milan on the citadel, his ears were deafened with shouts of *Viva San Marco !* His threats of military punishment tended only to exasperate the citizens ; they ran to arms, and barricaded the streets, till the arrival of the Venetian contingent ; when the lofty tone assumed by the *provveditori*, joined with the decided expression of popular feeling, induced the Milanese general to desist from his faithless project. Treviso was not the only acquisition which this war obtained for Venice ; since yet earlier, in 1386, the quarrel with Carrara had been employed as a pretext for the recovery of Corfu, which had been possessed and colonized by Venice nearly two centuries before.

* Andrea Gataro, 666

Notwithstanding these fruits of their alliance with Visconti, it was not possible but that the Venetians must early discover the disadvantages of that connexion. The two houses of Della Scala and of Carrara, sufficiently strong to maintain independence if supported by the republic, were otherwise too weak to inspire reasonable jealousy ; and while Padua and Verona continued to form for her so many outworks against the dangerous ambition of Galeazzo, her superior force and wealth might always retain their signors in virtual, if not in avowed vassalage. Yet she had permitted herself, through a blind hope of immediate gain, to abandon one of these neighbours to destruction, after having stimulated him to war, and to assist more actively in the sacrifice of the other, in order to promote the aggrandizement of Visconti, the most powerful, the most aspiring, and the most perfidious of the Italian princes. The revenues of Lombardy were rich and unembarrassed ; her master retained a larger force in his pay than any other European monarch ; he swayed his hereditary dominions with absolute despotism ; and great as was his power, it was far exceeded by his ambition. Italy itself was the deep stake for which he played ; and his vast means conspired with his personal qualities to place the chances of the game much in his favour. Singularly contrasting personal timidity with moral hardihood—while he avoided the field, and not only secluded himself in his palace, strongly fortified and garrisoned, but employed unusual precautions to guard himself against his very guards—he was instant in decision, firm in danger, undiscouraged by failure. No remorse for crime, no respect for fidelity interrupted his dark but certain policy : and one by one he overthrew or he undermined every obstacle which intervened between himself and his final goal. Such was the neighbour whose standard Venice, with her own hands, had assisted to plant on the coasts of the Adriatic and the borders of the *Lagune*.

The attempt upon Treviso, and some undisguised avowals which Visconti had felt himself sufficiently strong to utter, contributed to open the eyes of the republic to the dangers which had been created in great part by her own improvident avarice ; and the change of policy to which she was led is remarkable even in this history of fickleness. She entered into a treaty with Francesco Novello, whom she

had recently dethroned, for the express purpose of his restoration. The first months of that prince's captivity at Milan were passed in unavailing complaints, and useless but natural remonstrances. To these a wiser course succeeded ; and by entering upon a ceaseless round of pleasure, he endeavoured to persuade Galeazzo that he had at length become reconciled to his fortunes. The capital re-echoed with festivity ; and the banquet, the bridal-feast, and the tournament were always graced by the presence of Carrara. Visconti, nevertheless, was far too wary to be deceived ; and when this change of habits was reported to him, he again employed a proverb, " Every animal may be tamed except the fox." Francesco took one step further ; he appeared before the council, and there, solemnly resigning all pretensions to Padua, he threw himself, wholly and unconditionally, on the generosity and kindness of the Comte de Vertù. Whether Galeazzo now believed in the sincerity of his captive, or whether, as is more probable, he was shamed into concession, cannot be decided ; but he returned his hearty thanks, accepted the renunciation, gave permission for the Lady Taddea to visit Milan, and provided ample funds for her journey. Though Carrara's affections were engrossed by the renewal of that domestic happiness which he so ardently cherished, he still pretended a greater fondness for amusements than before, and appeared to cultivate an intimacy the most confidential with Galeazzo. The count, on the other hand, sent him many courteous messages ; and, according to the fashion of the times, many rare delicacies for his table. He even pretended that he had it in contemplation to make over to him, in perpetuity, the signory of Lodi.

Meantime, Francesco found means to establish communication with his father, with Padua, and with Venice. To a confidential agent of the first he explained two designs which he meditated for the death of Galeazzo ; both of them sufficiently evincing his undaunted bearing and carelessness of life. One was, to accost his enemy singly in the streets of Pavia, and, when near enough, to run him through the body. " It is true," he added, " that I can scarcely escape being cut to pieces, but many of our family will remain. The tyrant's nephews, Aluise and Carlo Visconti, who are now in his dungeons, will succeed to the

throne, and by them my father and my children will be requited for my good service. But this plan is dangerous, and might fail." The second scheme was equally daring, and far less rash. The man who resolves to sacrifice his own life may, for the most part, command that of his enemy; yet such double murder, like all other mere violence, is but a coarse and clumsy instrument, requiring strength rather than address for its management. Carrara, in this instance, looked to safety as well as to revenge. "The count," he said, "goes hunting on Tuesdays, in great state. His servants and officers, with dogs, hawks, and all the implements of chase, ride first,—next, the ladies of the court,—next, the count, with one of the ladies of his family on the crupper, or on a palfrey by his side,—next, the gentlemen of the court,—and after these, and closing the train, three hundred horsemen, of whom fifty are in steel corslets. My own retainers amount to sixty, all chosen men, completely armed and well mounted. Now, as they are passing, and just as the count comes opposite the inner gate of my house, we will charge them with lances in rest, shouting 'Aluise and Carlo Visconti!' The suddenness of this shock must prove irresistible; the count and those about him will be borne down; the rest will take to flight; the partisans of Bernabo will rise and liberate his sons, while I seize one of the gates and secure a retreat for myself and my friends."

Through the weakness of the follower to whom these designs were confidentially imparted, and the treachery of a fellow-courtier who artfully extracted them from him, they were discovered to Galeazzo; but he received the intelligence with cold thanks, and seemingly attached little credit to it. Carrara, however, informed of the revelation, deemed it prudent to accept a retirement which had been previously offered him at Cortasone, and proceeded thither on a liberal allowance. The castle which he now occupied was almost in ruins, but the surrounding country was agreeable and fruitful; and the new inhabitant seemingly devoted himself to agriculture and the chase. His first acts were well calculated to win affection from the oppressed vassals whom he found on the estate; and who, being

* Andrea Gataro, 712.

Guelphs, loudly testified their displeasure at being transferred to a Ghibelin. He promised that they should discover in him no difference of party ; he declared that he did not come among them to interfere with any individual's property ; and by a formal instrument he released them, for a period of ten years, from all feudal burdens and imposts, except the provision of wood, labour, and carriages, for the repairs of the castle.

Nor were they peasants only whom this frank demeanour and open-handed bounty attached to his person, but even the Governor of Asti cultivated his friendship, and, at an early period, gave a signal proof of esteem, by informing him of a design upon his life. Visconti, it seems, either at length believing the reports which he had at first treated lightly, or willing to disburden himself of an expensive, if not a dangerous prisoner, had resolved upon his assassination ; and the governor acquainted him with this foul intention. Cortasone was no longer a secure abode for Carrara, and although uncertain of an asylum elsewhere, he resolved to quit it. No adventures of any individual which we can call to mind excite more vivid interest, or are more deeply tinctured with romance than those which Carrara encountered in consequence of this determination ; and in tracing them, we are obliged more than once to reassure ourselves that we are engaged not on a fable of imagination, but on an authentic and well-avouched history.*

Some Florentine merchants in Asti assisted him in negotiating with the authorities of their capital ; and all things being favourably arranged for his flight, he asked a guide and an escort from the governor, in whom he reposed entire confidence ; at the same time giving out that it was his intention, in company with his lady, to satisfy a vow, by a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Antonio at Vienne. To that town, accordingly, he hastened with the utmost speed, and passed on through Avignon to Marseilles. Receiving intelligence that the captain of that city was preparing to arrest him, he embarked without delay, and saved himself but by a moment ; for an attendant, who was mistaken for him, was seized and thrown into prison. But the season was unfavourable for a voyage ; the Lady Taddea was far

* The following details occupy a large portion of Gatare's Chronicle, to which, in this instance, our reference must be general.

advanced in pregnancy ; and the violence of the equinoctial gales exposed her to so great suffering, that she earnestly implored to pursue her journey by land. The affections of Francesco could not resist this appeal, although he well knew the additional peril to which consent exposed him. Disembarking, therefore, with only two attendants, he ordered the master of the vessel to proceed slowly along the coast ; and having hired an ass, on which the Lady Taddea was placed, himself being on foot, they advanced for two days through a difficult and intricate country chiefly occupied by Ghibelins and dependants of Visconti. At Frezzo they again went on board, and after encountering a heavy gale, passing Nice and Monaco, they arrived at Torbio. Here, when preparing to repose themselves in the town, they were informed that the châtelain was a creature of the Comte de Vertù, and they were compelled to lodge for the night in a ruined church on the beach. When they arose in the morning, sleepless and harassed, the stormy appearance of the sea forbade re-embarkation, and they again commenced a long day's march to Ventimiglia. In that town, their party, although small, excited attention and curiosity ; and it was reported to the *podestà*, by the busy suspicions of the peasants, that a man with four companions two of them women, had arrived at the *osteria* beyond the gate ; that one of the women, by her demeanour, was manifestly a personage of high station ; and that, judging by those who surrounded her, there could be little doubt it was a case of forcible abduction. The magistrate, deceived by these representations, despatched an officer, with ten soldiers, to bring the travellers before him. Francesco, when they overtook him, fought his way to the shore, and succeeded in getting his lady and her attendants on shipboard ; but he himself, being last, was overpowered and taken prisoner. The officer charged the captain of the vessel not to sail, as he valued his life ; and demanded the name of his prisoner. When informed that it was the late Lord of Padua, he ordered his men to fall back and ground their arms ; and advancing with an air of respect, proffered obedience, and asked pardon ; adding, that he was a Guelph, and had once served the house of Padua. On receiving this assurance, Francesco requested that he might be escorted to the castle, where the *podestà*, having listened

to his explanation, supplied him with provisions, and reconducted him to his ship.

A favourable wind bore the fugitives rapidly to the territory of the Marquis of Carreiro. Towards evening they again landed with the same companions as before ; and anxious to hasten through a district in which they were beset by enemies, they travelled during the whole night on foot. At break of day, exhausted by hunger and fatigue, they procured some food from a neighbouring cottage ; and while some shared this homely fare, the others kept guard among the surrounding trees. While thus occupied, a stranger approached, and inquiring for the Lord of Padua, in the name of Donati, his chief friend at Florence, produced the countersigns with which Carrara had furnished his agent, the halves of broken dice and of some coins bearing his own impress. These corresponded with the tallies ; and Carrara, satisfied of the good faith of the messenger, accompanied him on board a vessel in waiting to convey them to Genoa. On their passage, once again they encountered a storm ; and being driven into Savona, they had landed, and were preparing for refreshment, when an express from the doge warned them to hasten from the coast, which swarmed with Galeazzo's emissaries. Without food or repose, they hurried back to their ship ; and in the morning, having entered Genoa in the disguise of German pilgrims, they concealed themselves a while in a mean inn, and then sailed from Capona to Moncione. Here, while refreshing themselves, they were alarmed by the arrival of a courier to prepare quarters for one of Galeazzo's officers, who, with a troop of forty men, was on his route to Pisa. A thicket afforded them shelter till this company had passed by ; and Carrara then cheered the drooping spirits of his lady, by assuring her that certain succour was at hand ; that he had warned a friend at Pisa, deeply indebted to his house, of his approach ; and that every moment horses might be expected for their conveyance. Pietro Gambacorta, he added, when himself in exile and distress, had found protection from Francesco Vecchio, and an asylum in Padua ; whence, after a long abode, through the influence of the same prince, he was enabled to return to his native city, laden with wealth and honours. Scarcely were these words uttered, when the hope which they had kindled in Taddea

was fatally extinguished by the return of the messenger with excuses from Gambacorta ; he dared not furnish horses ; he dared not permit Carrara's entrance into Pisa ; the bloodhounds of Visconti had been slipped, the cry was up, and already they were tracking the fugitives.

No token of impatience, not a breath of complaint escaped Carrara—"God will restore us—we must struggle with misfortune!" was his sole comment. He raised the lifeless Taddea, who had been overpowered by the unexpected disappointment, and entering Pisa with his Florentine guide, regardless of all personal hazard, procured a horse and some food, and returned with them to his lady. A wretched stable in the worst inn without the walls of Casina gave them refuge for the night ; and Donati, who had joined them, the Florentine, and the rest of the company sentinelled the door, while the signor and Taddea threw themselves on some straw within. But in the dead of the night an unknown person knocked loudly at the inn, and demanded the Signor Francesco da Carrara. "I am he," replied Donati, with noble promptitude, as yet ignorant of the inquirer's object. It was a messenger from Gambacorta, bringing an explanatory letter, horses, and a few necessaries for the road, and commanding the travellers to the strict attention of the host. In consequence of these injunctions, they were at length admitted within the house, and for the first night since her departure from Asti, Taddea enjoyed the almost forgotten luxury of a bed. On the following day they arrived at Florence.

In the short interval, however, which had been occupied by these painful adventures, the policy of the Tuscan government had materially altered ; its differences with Visconti had been adjusted, at least for a time, and Carrara, instead of being received with open arms, as a prince unjustly dethroned, and whose restoration was an object of national care, found himself considered but as a private individual, from whom a return of gratitude was expected for the asylum granted to his necessity. Yet, as Florence was far enough removed from his chief enemy to afford reasonable assurance of safety, he collected in it the remainder of his family and a large treasure in money and jewels ; and he appears to have courted with assiduity and success the friendship of the resident Venetian ambassador.

So dark and intricate, indeed, were the changes of Italian politics at the time of which we are treating, that it is far from improbable that Venice, even at this early period, and during an avowed alliance with Galeazzo, arranged with Carrara, soon after his arrival at Florence, the plans which were afterward matured for the discomfiture of his rival.

Far from being discouraged by the ill success of his hopes in Tuscany, disappointment seems only to have whetted more keenly the activity of the exiled prince. He applied to the Bolognese, and was coldly refused; and so low were his fortunes supposed to have fallen, that at Cortona he was invited to enter, as an adventurer, among Hawkwood's *condottieri*. From this offer he excused himself, but he thought it wise to engage his brother in the free service, upon which connexion he might hereafter, perhaps, found a useful claim. Coasting the Adriatic in disguise, amid almost constant peril, he touched at Chiozza, was recognised, and narrowly escaped capture, and but for a sudden change of wind, must have been overtaken by the squadron which gave chase. After employing many months in traversing Italy, hopes of aid gleamed upon him both from Florence and Bologna. It had become plain to each of those governments, that Visconti was only temporizing, and that his preparations were ultimately directed to war. Carrara, accordingly, was summoned back to Florence, and he undertook the dangerous office of ambassador from that republic to the Duke of Bavaria, in order to concert a league, not only for the recovery of his own dominions but also for common defence against Milan. In order to effect the purposes of this mission, it was necessary that he should receive from Venice a safe-conduct through the Trevisan marches; and it may be believed that a secret understanding existed among these several states, from the guarantee given by Bologna and Florence, that such an instrument should be procured. Passing by sea from Leghorn to Provence, Carrara then crossed Dauphiny and Savoy to Genoa, and proceeded by Lausanne to Zurich. In that city, as he rode into the courtyard of the inn at which he was to lodge, an agent of Visconti bowed to him, and Carrara, with the presence of mind which appears never to have failed him in any peril, immediately sent for the master of the house, threw off his

disguise, avowed his name, and explained his danger. The host expressed great emotion, and in token of his sincerity produced a silver cup bearing the arms of Carrara, which had been presented to him when in Italy by Francesco Vecchio: He then pledged himself for the safety of his illustrious guest, procured him armed guides, and personally accompanying the escort, conducted him by daybreak to Constance, where he crowned this act of fidelity by one of equal disinterestedness, and refused all recompense for the important services which he had performed.

The Duke of Bavaria, the brother-in-law of Bernabo Visconti whom Galeazzo had murdered, listened eagerly to Carrara's details of his own wrongs and of the crimes of the usurper, applauded the great enterprise which he was meditating, promised the most active co-operation, and agreed to advance funds for the supply of twelve thousand men. But the brilliant hopes thus excited were again dimmed by the fickleness of Bologna and Florence. The spies of the Count of Milan had obtained knowledge of the transactions at Munich, and of the readiness of the two Italian governments to connect themselves with Bavaria. Alarmed at this intelligence, Visconti lost not a moment in offering such concessions as might secure the continuance of peace; and a league of alliance for ten years was concluded with the two republics, some few hours before a messenger from Carrara brought to Florence a draught of the counter-treaty which he had been employed to negotiate.

For the first time, the fortitude of Carrara appears to have bowed under this shock. When he received the intelligence, he fell, says Gataro, as from a blow. The affectionate cares of his sister Catarina, and of her noble husband Stefano, Count of Segna in Croatia, with whom he was staying at Modrusa, consoled and revived him. His kinsman promised to abide by him in every extremity, and to bring into the field two thousand horse, while some Hungarian friends would answer for three thousand more. He represented, however, that it was above all imperatively necessary to gain over the signory of Venice, without whose good-will success would be impossible; and he added that the King of Bosnia was indignant with Visconti, who had treacherously supplied his enemies the Turks with arms and treasure, during a recent war; and that it was far from

improbable that an urgent representation might procure his accession to the alliance.

Carrara undertook this fresh negotiation, and prepared for the journey. Before its commencement, however, his sister prevailed upon him to consult a woman in the neighbourhood, of high reputation as a prophetess.* However incredulous of this sibyl's pretensions to knowledge of futurity, Francesco, partly from curiosity, partly from willingness to gratify a request which Catarina's love had prompted, consented to the experiment. The seer was brought to Stefano's castle, where Carrara related to her much of his past life (for her science, it appears, was entirely prospective), imparted most confidentially all his designs and wishes, and demanded information as to the events about to come. The prophetess required time, took her leave, and reappeared at the hour which she had appointed. She then told him, as we are assured, many things concerning his future course; that he should re-enter Padua in June, and recover its sovereignty; and that his mission to Bosnia was at an end, for that it would be necessary that he should again treat with Bavaria. "You do not credit my words," she continued, with solemnity, observing his contemptuous smile of disbelief; "but I affirm to you that, at this moment the Comte de Vertù has broken his faith with Bologna and Florence, that war is in preparation, and that messengers are now seeking you with this announcement. For your father, concerning whom you ask, he will die in prison." Happy was it that her fatal presages did not extend to Carrara's own last moments, and that the remaining years of his life escaped additional imbitterment from an anticipation of the bloody goal at which they were to terminate! On the morrow, as he was already on his route, he was stopped by messengers from Florence, who, producing their credentials, informed him that fresh disputes had arisen between Visconti and their republic, that they were authorized to instruct him to renew the treaty with Bavaria, and that ambassadors were already in Friuli, waiting to proceed in due time to its ratification.[†]

Great as was the delight and astonishment of Carrara at this most unexpected intelligence, the prediction of which

* *Una sapientissima donna*, Andrea Gataro, 763.

† Andrea Gataro, ut sup.

he had rejected as an idle dream, he still doubted how far it might be prudent to rely on the ever-shifting policy of his Italian allies. The messengers earnestly avouched the fixed and serious intention of their governments, and assured him that there was strong reason to hope for the assistance even of Venice. This last suggestion prevailed, and he no longer hesitated to undertake the proposed resumption of his embassy. It was in all points successful, and he found the Duke of Bavaria continuing firm to his original promises. But the season was too far advanced to permit military operations, and the winter accordingly was spent in diplomacy. To Carrara it brought also profound domestic sorrows, and no small diminution of hope. He mourned the sudden death of his faithful kinsman, Count Stefano, and of his aunt, Lieta da Carrara, the wife of a scarcely less valued and powerful friend, the Count of Ottenburgh. His brother, whom he had enrolled under Hawkwood, was surprised and taken prisoner; his father was transferred to more close imprisonment at Monza; and the Florentines, notwithstanding their late professions, seemed anxiously looking for reconciliation with Milan. These complicated ills pressed heavily on his wounded spirit; and worn down by fatigue, anxiety, and disappointment, he passed many weeks confined to the solitude of a sick couch, in a remote and barbarous district. Spring and better tidings A. D. restored both health and confidence. His brother 1390. regained his liberty; Florence and Bologna were forced into an open declaration of war; and Venice, more than ever jealous of the growing power of Visconti, willingly consented to observe a strict neutrality.

Impatient of the tyranny of Galeazzo, the Paduans were well prepared to tender renewed allegiance to their former lord; and Carrara, without waiting for foreign succours, resolved to attempt the recovery of his dominions by the single aid of his yet faithful subjects. For this purpose he set forward from the castle of Ottenburgh, in Carinthia, in April, with a force not exceeding three hundred men-at-arms and two hundred infantry. The Duke of Bavaria wished him to delay his departure one month longer, when he promised to accompany him; but Carrara replied that he would be in Padua before the duke began his march, and have all things prepared for his reception. As he advanced,

numbers flocked to his standard ; his brother joined him with a hundred and fifty chosen lances ; every town through which he passed declared in his favour ; and he was met by a deputation from the capital, which assured him that the citizens would rise *en masse*, as soon as he appeared at their gates. By the middle of June he encamped under the walls, at the head of a strong regular force, and supported by more than twelve thousand armed peasants. The Milanese governors prepared for defence ; they received Carrara's summons with disdain, thrust the pennant of the herald who bore it into his trumpet as a mark of indignity, and desired him to return to his lord and inform him that he was a fool who, having been thrown out of the window, expected to come in again by the door.

A brilliant *coup de main* by night placed the city in Carrara's hands. At the head of twelve chosen men, the signor himself was the first to ford the Brenta and mount the ramparts ; and at daybreak the citadel only, to which they had retired, was left to the Milanese. Little blood had been shed in this conquest ; and even in the few houses of his leading enemies which it was deemed politic to abandon to military pillage, the humanity of Carrara procured respect for the female apartments. In the first moments of victory, he repaired to the church of St. Antonio, and remaining on his knees, in full armour, during the celebration of mass, he arose at its conclusion, and taking off his richly embroidered surcoat, laid it on the altar, as a votive offering to his patron and protector.

Galeazzo, though superior both in the number and quality of his troops, had spread them over far too extended a line to be able to concentrate a sufficient force for the defence or the recovery of Padua. Beyond a few affairs of posts and some petty skirmishes, nothing was effected by him during the succeeding campaign ; and each fortress and town within Carrara's ancient territory yielded in succession to its former lord. Venice outstepped her declared neutrality, gave reception to the ambassadors who announced Francesco's victories, and granting to them the stores and troops which they were instructed to request, furnished large supplies of artillery from the arsenal, and placed four hundred crossbowmen at their disposal. Now, too, large reinforcements from Bavaria, headed by their duke, had

reached the walls of Padua, others followed from Florence, and before the close of August the citadel, the last hold of Visconti, had surrendered, and Francesco da Carrara was firmly re-established on the throne of his fathers.

The mediation of Venice terminated a petty war in which Francesco engaged, soon after his restoration, with Alberto of Ferrara; and at the close of two years, peace was ratified with the Comte de Vertu. In the spring of 1392, Francesco, determining to return thanks in person for the important aid he had received from the signory, set out for Venice; and on his arrival at Fusina, he was met by the Bucentaur, and escorted to the capital by the gondolas of more than two hundred nobles. The doge awaited his landing on the *piazzetta*, where Carrara, leading his eldest son by the hand, threw himself on his knees at the feet of the Venetian prince, expressed his deep gratitude for the favours which had been bestowed upon him, and his ardent hope that all former causes of animosity were now forgotten for ever. He entreated the signory to receive him and all his house as their children, even as he, from his very heart, now offered them all that love and duty which a son owes to his father! Veniero raised and embraced him with affection, conducted him to the ducal palace, and delivered an answer from the throne in full conformity to his wishes. After a few days spent in honourable entertainment and festivity, Carrara returned to Padua, and then, for the first time since his restoration, he appears to have felt sufficient confidence in his stability to desire the presence of Taddea. He was attached to her with a tenderness and devotion which excluded all selfish feeling, and which induced him to consent to the pain of long separation when union was not compatible with her security.

Although reconciled to Visconti, Carrara had not yet obtained the release of his father, and in his person the predictions of the Croatian sibyl were again to be verified. In spite, or in consequence, of the attendance of five physicians employed by the Comte de Vertù, notwithstanding the skill which they manifested, and the magical liquors (*solenni liquori*) which they prescribed, Francesco A. D. Vecchio terminated his long course of unhappiness 1393. about three years after his son's restoration. If posthumous honours were able to compensate a whole life of restless-

ness and suffering, the spirit of the departed signor might have been gratified by the magnificence of his obsequies. The body lay in state at Milan, habited in cloth of gold, and girt with a sword ; golden spurs were buckled on the feet, and jewelled rings glittered on the fingers. It was afterward conveyed with no less ceremony to Padua, and interred there with a splendour of pageantry which Gataro appears to have contemplated and recorded with unusual delight.

For a few years, the reign of Francesco Novello was comparatively tranquil ; and we turn for a short time from his romantic story in order to resume it hereafter with yet deeper interest than before. The attention of Venice was now forcible attracted to the East, where the feeble reign of John Palæologus had been succeeded by one yet more feeble, the sceptre of Constantinople having passed to his son Manuel. Bajazet, the fourth Ottoman sultan, had rendered both princes his tributaries, stripped them of almost all their territory without the capital, and ultimately, in the reign of Manuel, laid siege to Constantinople itself. The affrighted emperor bought off immediate destruction by the payment of ten thousand florins, the cession of a quarter of his metropolis, and the grant of a mosque for the worship of the prophet. But the appetite of the Turkish despot, only whetted to greater keenness by the taste of spoil, urged him to violate this treaty, and to threaten new and far greater exactions. His progress alarmed those Christian powers whose interests were connected with the East ; and Sigismond of Hungary, the Genoese, and the Venetians formed an alliance, not so much for the assistance of Palæologus as for the defence of their own territorial or commercial rights. Venice, earnestly desirous to add strength to this league, cast her eyes upon both England and France, the two kingdoms from which she hoped to draw most effectual support ; and Carlo Zeno, having A. D. 1396. been selected as her ambassador to those powers, employed nine months in his important mission. The court of Paris was struck with astonishment when the accomplished envoy, having first addressed the king in Latin, repeated the substance of his speech in correct French, a language in which he was practised, from having spent his youth at Avignon.* But Charles VI. had little ability to

* *Vita Car. Zeni*, ap. Murat. xix. p. 316.

undertake distant expeditions ; and he contented himself, as sovereign of Genoa, which had submitted to his protection, by ordering the equipment of a fleet from her ports. The distractions in England were yet greater than in France, and the realm, harassed by the cabals of the nobles, and weakened by the indolence, the profusion, and the voluptuousness of the second Richard, was on the eve of a domestic revolution. The tongue of our remote island did not at that time form a part of Cisalpine study, and Zeno transacted his diplomacy in Latin ; but we are assured that he gained his object, and was highly favoured by the king. Notwithstanding his success, scarcely ten thousand men could be raised in France for this crusade. They were marshalled under the command of John, Count of Nevers, son of Philip the Hardy, Duke of Burgundy ; and they embarked with ill-judged and presumptuous confidence, more as if about to swell the pomp of a pageant or a spectacle, than to encounter a difficult and hazardous warfare. But their ranks, although scanty, were supplied with the flower of the French chivalry : among them were four cousins of the king, and the constable, marshal, and admiral of France. A thousand knights of noble blood were attended by numerous youthful *valets* ; and a train of facile beauties, for whom the camp presented less of terror than of attraction, shared the peril and rewarded the fondness of those lovers to whom choice or chance had attached them. The combined fleet, amounting to forty-four sail, swept the Archipelago and the Sea of Marmora without encountering a foe, and took its station, under the command of the Venetian admiral Tomaso Moncenigo, at the mouth of the Danube. Here it was able to communicate with the host of Sigismund, who, with one hundred thousand men, of whom sixty thousand were cavalry, awaited the arrival of the allies on the plains of Buda. It belongs not to our present narrative to detail the unfortunate events of this most disastrous campaign, in which the only portion allotted to Venice by the chance of war was that of saving the wreck of her defeated confederates. In spite of the prudent cautions of Sigismund, the rashness and inexperience of the French hurried on the fatal battle of Nicopolis ; and the Venetian fleet learned the total destruction of their allies and the slaughter of the entire French

Sept. 26.

host, with the exception of its captured princes, by the arrival of a bark conveying the King of Hungary and not more than seven of his retinue, fugitives from the lost field.*

While Venice had been thus unsuccessfully engaged in the East, Galeazzo was steadily prosecuting his schemes of aggrandizement in Italy. The avarice of the emperor Wenceslaus had fixed a hundred thousand florins as the price at which he would permit the erection of Milan into a dutchy and an imperial fief; and Galeazzo, having ful-
Sept. 12, 1395. filled the stipulated conditions, celebrated his corona-
tion with unprecedented magnificence. If we believe the chroniclers, more ambassadors than any world save that of romance produces, honoured the proud ceremonial with their presence. Besides the representatives of all the Christian powers, there were to be seen those of the Grand Turk, of the King of the Tartars, of the Great Soltan, of Tamerlane, of many other heathen princes, and even of Prester John. All these were lodged and entertained at the expense of Milan; but in return, they had brought with them presents of jewels, estimated at upwards of a million of gold. The two elder sons of Carrara repaired to the new duke's court, and they were received by the wily prince with such distinction as might have marked him the hereditary friend rather than the determined foe of their house. He advanced on foot a bowshot to meet them; he embraced and kissed them on the forehead, and taking a hand of each he walked between them to the palace, where, with a profuse magnificence unknown to later times, lodgings were assigned

* Froissart distinctly ascribes the disasters of the Christian host, in a great measure, to the treachery of Visconti, who communicated their plans to Bajazet (Lamorabagu). He introduces the Turk expressing his joy that the Hungarians had crossed the Danube: "Of all this I hadde knowledge four monthe past by my grete friende the Lorde of Myllayne, who sent me goshaufkes, gersfalcons, and faucons to the nombre of twelve, whiche were the best and sayrest that ever I sawe; and with this present he wrote to me by name alle the heedes and chiefe captians of the barones of France, suche as shulde come to make me warre; in the which letters was also conteyned, that if I myght get them in my daunger, they shulde be worthe to me a myllyon of floreynes; and also hewe there shulde bo in company of the lymytees of Fraunce more than fyve hundred knighthes, valyant men of armes; also the Duke of Myllayne wrote, that surely they wyll gyve me batayle." —*Lord Berners*, ii. 648, ed. 1812, 410. Froissart, in the same chapter, gives many particulars of the history of the family of Visconti.

for the entertainment of themselves and of their train of five hundred horse. When the imperial ministers had placed upon his head the ducal bonnet, gorgeously studded with jewels of inappreciable value, he took it from his brow and presented it to the young princes, at the same time remitting an annual tribute of seven thousand ducats, to which Padua was bound by the late peace. "This," he courteously added, "is but a small gift for yourselves. If your sire had been here, we would have shown him how deeply we honour his worth, how earnestly we desire to call him brother and friend!" The succeeding festivities continued during twenty days; and but a few months after their celebration, the Duke of Milan once again took the field against this valued friend and brother!

The territories of Mantua had long presented an alluring prize to the ambition of Visconti; and the tie of kinsmanship by which he was bound to their captain, Francesco di Gonzaga, who had married his cousin and sister-in-law, were little likely to restrain him from spoliation whenever opportunity might offer. Yet so strict at one time had been the connexion between these princes, that Gonzaga was employed in escorting to France, in 1389, a daughter of Visconti betrothed to Louis, Duke of Orleans; and the Duke of Milan expressed his gratitude by a request, than which none during the middle ages was considered as more expressive of affection, and of a wish to confer honour—that his friend would quarter the armorial bearings of the Visconti with his own.* The remainder of their domestic history forms a tragedy replete with horror, and involving the most fiendish atrocity on the part of Galeazzo. Agnes, the consort of Gonzaga, to whom she had borne four children, was a daughter of Bernabo Visconti, and stood, therefore, to Galeazzo in the double relation which we have just noticed; but the tyrant, dreading her remembrance of the murder of her father and the spoliation of her brothers by his hand, and anxious to remove the influence which she might be supposed to possess over her husband's mind, resolved upon her destruction. To compass this foul end, he employed agents who poisoned the ear of Gonzaga with suspicions of his wife's fidelity, and who

* *Equicola Commentari Mantouani*, lib. II. p. III.

whispered that, in conjunction with Visconti, she had planned his assassination. Letters in the handwriting of the Comte de Vertù, concealed for the purpose in her apartment, and confessions wrung by torture from her secretary, who, from a vain hope of mercy avowed whatever was required, were adduced in confirmation of her guilt; and the intrigue succeeding but too well, the miserable and deluded husband issued orders for her execution. But a short time, however, elapsed before the innocence of the murdered princess was established on proofs not admitting doubt; and Gonzaga, stung with remorse for the perpetration of the great crime into which he had been betrayed, was doomed also to defend himself against accusations of cruelty, injustice, and blood-guiltiness which Galeazzo unblushingly preferred against him in every court of Italy.* The seeds of war between these princes were, therefore, profusely sown. Yet, although the horrible iniquity which we have just related occurred in 1391, it was not until five years afterward that hostilities were openly declared, and even then Galeazzo was the aggressor.† In the spring of 1397, Giacopo dal Verme invested Mantua with twenty thousand horse and fifteen thousand foot. The attempt was not unexpected, and the combined forces of Florence, of Padua, and of the Marquis of Ferrara signally defeated the Milanese captain at Governolo, with the loss of ten thousand men.

This severe and unlooked-for check inclined Galeazzo to listen to negotiation. The Venetians, who had not Aug. 28. declared themselves, but who secretly favoured and assisted the alliance,‡ were chosen as mediators. But the difficulties arising from their own oblique and temporizing

* Platina, *Hist. Mantuana*, ill. ap. Murat. xx. 756.

† Scip. Ammirato, *Ist. Fiorentina ad ann. 1391*, lib. xv. vol. iii. p. 813. Sozomenus Pistoriensis (ap. Murat. xvi. 1143). A strange assertion is made by Johannes de Muisis in the *Chronicon Placentinum* (ap. Murat. xvi. 553), that Gonzaga put his princess to death solely to insult Visconti, *in dedecu dicti Domini Comitis Virtutum et non propter alienum causam*. This accusation of gratuitous wickedness, so alien from every other record of Gonzaga, is repeated, almost in the same words, by the anonymous author of the *Annales Mediolanenses* (*ibid.* 816).

‡ Daru, lib. xi. p. 209, seems to make the Venetians open adherents to this alliance. We borrow our representation from Andrea Gattare, 1396, who states that Carrara, with very great difficulty, obtained from the use of seven armed galleys, which were probably only let out

policy, and yet more from the subtle and perfidious designs of Visconti, protracted the conferences through eight months, and even at the close of that long period, forbade the signature of peace. It was not possible that interests so conflicting should be reconciled while, at least on one side, there was a total absence of good faith ; and, after all, the diplomats were compelled to rest content with the arrangement of a ten years' truce, during which all parties agreed to remain in their existing condition. This, it was plain, was but an expedient, a hollow and unsubstantial compact, which any one of those contracting it would unhesitatingly violate whenever he obtained sufficient strength to do so with advantage.

The reign of the doge Veniero closed during the last weeks of the fourteenth century, and the native historians are loud in praise of the benignity of his sway. It was uninterrupted by domestic commotion ; and during the unusual course of eighteen years, the capital was blessed with continued abundance. One instance of this prince's rigorous and unbending justice, as it is called, has been much and, there can be little doubt, most undeservedly vaunted. The lax morals of an Italian city suffered little offence from the intimate bond which the only son of the doge had openly contracted with the wife of one of the chief nobles ; but when, in a moment of pettish jealousy, the lover suspended horns over the porch of the injured husband's palace, public decency was considered to be violated, and the vengeance of the law was loudly invoked and sternly executed. A fine of one hundred ducats, a prohibition from entering the quarter of the city inhabited by the insulted lady, and an imprisonment for two months, was the punishment assigned for this youthful outrage. Veniero, it is said, expressed a wish to pass sentence of death ; and although restrained from formally pronouncing a judgment so disproportionate to the crime, yet by the strictness with which he enforced the more lenient punishment he inflicted it virtually. The young man was seized with a dangerous sickness before the term of his imprisonment expired ; nevertheless, the obdurate doge refused to permit any remission of his penalty, and his son died in prison. Unless the law adjudged capital punishment under lingering agony to the offender's transgression, it is plain that Veniero out-

stepped his duty by this mistaken imitation of the most questionable portion of Roman stoicism.

The embellishment of the capital, interrupted by the troubrous war of Chiozza, again advanced with rapid steps during this comparatively tranquil reign. The southern side of the *Piazza di San Marco*, a work long since commenced, was now completed ; and the *Piazza* adjoining the Rialto was paved with marble. Besides these, a far greater ornament was added to the city. During a night of general illumination, on some occasion of public rejoicing, the wooden turret which then crowned the *Campanile di San Marco* caught fire and was destroyed. The foundations of that stupendous tower, which rises three hundred and thirty feet above the ground, and which subsequently was ennobled by becoming the study of Galileo, were laid in the reign of Pietro Tribuno, but the body was not finished till within fifty years of the period of which we are now treating. Veniero, after the above-named accident, built the upper gallery of stone, added the pyramidal summit with which the Campanile is at present terminated, and enriched the pinnacle with a profuse coating of gold.

Although the virtues of this prince secured for him the general love of his people, he was not more successful than his predecessors in escaping the jealous restraint of the aristocracy, and fresh trammels were imposed upon the small remnant of his personal freedom. The title *Monsignore*, by which the prince had been hitherto addressed, was abolished, and no higher appellation was permitted than *Messer il Doge*. He was forbidden to retain any fiefs without the limits of the state, or to contract any marriage for his children, unsanctioned by a majority of two-thirds of the signory, of the XL., and of the great council ; and the officers attached to his household were declared incapable of any public employment, not only during the period of their actual engagement in court duties, but even for a year after they might have resigned those appointments.

Michaele Steno, a *procuratore* of St. Mark, was invested with the ducal bonnet. He had served with distinction, A. D. 1400, he was rich, of gentle temper, and had entered his sixty-ninth year—all qualifications which rendered his election more than ordinarily popular. On those accounts, the festivals which celebrated his accession were

protracted through many months ;^{*} and the public joy was renewed at the close of the following year, when the emperor Robert honoured Venice with his presence. A.D. 1401. On the deposition of Wenceslaus, Robert of Bavaria had been called to the German throne ; but the Duke of Milan having refused to acknowledge his title, hostilities ensued, in which the Florentines and Carrara took part with the new emperor. They were defeated at Brescia, and Robert, with his empress, after retreating upon Padua, proceeded to Venice, in the hope of obtaining her alliance. He was received with distinguished honours. The Bucentaur, bearing the doge and signory, met the imperial travellers at San Giorgio, where, as soon as the emperor had passed from his own vessel, the doge uncovered, and threw himself upon his knees. He was instantly raised in the monarch's arms, and the two princes seated themselves side by side, while the barons and nobles stood around. The Cornaro palace was assigned for the residence of the emperor, that of Dandolo for the empress, and those mansions, which immediately fronted each other, were connected by a temporary bridge. Greatly, however, as the signory mistrusted the Duke of Milan, and willingly as they would have assisted in the diminution of his increasing power, it was not in the moment of his success that they felt disposed to break with him. While, therefore, they entertained their imperial visiter with magnificent spectacles, they declined any open espousal of his quarrel, refused even his solicitation for a loan, and so far disgusted him with their backwardness, that after a few conferences, at which Carrara also was present, he embarked privately on his return to Germany, without taking leave. So avowed a manifestation of displeasure ill accorded with the views of a goverment whose chief aim was to avoid any decided committal of itself ; and a swift vessel was despatched to overtake the emperor and solicit his return. He consented, and remained on the whole six weeks in Venice, with a mutual understanding that politics were not again to be discussed during his stay.

The arms of Visconti, in the following year, were chiefly directed against the Bolognese, whom he A.D. 1402. signally defeated on the 26th of June, at Casalecchio.

* Of these festivals a particular account may be found in the *Venetia descripta* of Sansovino, lib. x. p. 273.

The two elder sons of Carrara were taken prisoners in this engagement by the Duke of Mantua, whom the fluctuations of Italian intrigue had again arrayed on the side of his kinsman ; and the popularity which the virtues and mild administration of their father had established is strikingly evinced by the liberal offer which was made to him on this sad occasion by his subjects. A deputation from the various trades and chief burghers tendered him whatever sum was necessary for the ransom of his children ; but with equal liberality he declined this splendid donation, which the escape of Francesco Terzo, within a few days, rendered partly unnecessary. The confinement of his younger son, Giacomo, was protracted for a longer period ; but, in the end, he also evaded the vigilance of his jailers.

Before, however, this latter event occurred, the ambitious course of the Duke of Milan was cut short by death. The plague had again spread over Lombardy ; and it was now accompanied by the appearance of a comet, destined, as Gataro fully believes, according to the opinion of philosophers, not only to shake pestilence from its hair, but also to perplex monarchs.* Visconti, in order to avoid infection, quitted his court at Pavia, and shut himself up in the castle of Marignano. But the death-stroke pursued him to his retirement ; and although, for some days, he was kept alive, like the elder Carrara, by "magical liquors," he felt his end approaching. With a cheerful countenance, he summoned his attendants round his couch, and assured them of his gratitude to God for so visible an exhibition of his mindfulness of him in that blazing star. Having then given instructions for his interment, and portioned his dominions among

* *Paradise Lost*, i. 598 ; ii. 710 : passages which are borrowed from Tasso.

*Qual con le chiome sanguinose, horrende,
Splender cometa suol per l'aria addista,
Che i regni muta, e i feri morbi adduca,
Ai purpurei tiranni infusa luce.*

Ger. Lab. vii. 52.

As when, high-flaming, through the parched air,
A blood-red comet shakes his horrid hair,
And threatens, to despairing man below,
Disease and battle, pestilence and wo ;
States see their doom portended by his rays,
And purple tyrants tremble as they gaze.

HUNT, vii. 490.

his children, the most ambitious, the most turbulent, and the most unprincipled sovereign of his time left the fruits matured by a long life of crime to be withered, after his death, by the cold blasts of domestic faction and the tempest of foreign war.

CHAPTER X.

FROM A. D. 1402 TO A. D. 1406.

Venetian and Genoese Fleets observe the Progress of Timour—Carlo Zeno and Bouicault—Second Battle of Sapienza—Distractions of Milan—Carrara seizes Verona—Attempts Vicenza—It is previously occupied by the Venetians—War against Carrara—He is betrayed by Count Manfredi—Loses Verona—Siege of Padua—Pestilence—Carrara burns the Venetian Camp—He is driven into his Citadel—Accepts a Safe conduct to Venice—Is sentenced, with his two elder Sons, to capital Punishment—Their Deaths.

DOGE.

MICHAEL STENO.

DURING these events in Italy, new inquietudes had arisen in the East, from the rapid progress of a conqueror yet more to be dreaded than Bajazet. Timour, having overrun Asia, was invited by the falling Emperor of Constantinople to free him from the oppressive yoke of the Ottomans. The Tartar pressed on his march in the hope of fresh plunder; but at the mouth of the Don he was met by a suppliant train of merchants, Genoese, Catalonians, and Venetians, who implored protection for their commerce. The Barbarian swore that it should remain unmolested; and, in defiance of his oath, immediately occupied Asoph with his troops, pillaged and burned its factories, and threw into chains such Christians as escaped the sword. As he advanced in Natolia, the approaching collision of the two countless hosts which blackened the plains once distinguished by the contests of Pompey and Mithridates, excited

the most lively apprehensions among the great maritime powers of Europe; and when Bajazet was overthrown A. D. at Agora, the Dardanelles were observed both by 1402. a Venetian and a Genoese squadron, whose avowed object was to obstruct the passage of the flying Turks.

The fleet of the latter power received a large reinforcement in the spring of the following year, under the A. D. command of the Marechal de Boucicault, the governor 1403. to whom the King of France had committed the administration of Genoa. Boucicault had fought at Nicopolis; and two days after that defeat he had been brought into the presence of the pitiless conqueror, bound, naked, and classed among the nameless herd of prisoners whose appearance promised no ransom, and who were therefore destined to butchery. Already had the work of blood commenced, when he was recognised by the Count of Nevers, who with a few of his most distinguished companions had been separated from the other miserable captives, to glut the avarice rather than the cruelty of the victor. The prince threw himself upon his knees before Bajazet, declared the prisoner's quality, and obtained his life.* It was under this commander that the Genoese reinforcement arrived; and Venice, perhaps not unjustly suspicious of the ulterior designs of her former rival, hastened to counteract them by strengthening her own naval force in the same quarter. For that purpose Carlo Zeno, although now a *procuratore* of St. Mark, an officer who, unless in the utmost emergency, seldom quitted the city, was intrusted with the command; and his instructions were, to place all the colonies in security, and to watch the motions of the Genoese, but, if possible, to avoid hostilities.

The two fleets, nearly equal in numbers, first met in friendly guise off the island of Rhodes; but the communications between their admirals displayed and increased their mutual jealousy. Boucicault, perhaps, is scarcely to be exonerated from suspicion of a treacherous design to entrap Carlo Zeno; and the safety of the latter was em-

* Froissart, ii. 672, *ut sup.* Mr. Johnes has preserved a very graphic incident, which we do not find in Lord Berners. The Count of Nevers, it seems, had no language in which he could make himself intelligible to Bajazet; he therefore "made signs, as passing from one hand to the other, that he would give a large sum of money to soften the anger of the sultan."—xi. 307.

tirely owing to his prudence. When the Genoese commander, pleading indisposition as an excuse, requested a conference on board his own galley, Zeno answered, that the maritime laws of Venice forbade him from quitting the vessel under his immediate orders; and when invited to combine the fleets in a cruise against the Turks, in which, no doubt, Boucicault would have affected the chief command, the Venetian replied, that he was not permitted to make war without a decree of the senate. After this unsatisfactory encounter, the Venetians in fulfilment of their orders proceeded to the Morea, while the Genoese cruised along the ports of Syria. At Berytus, a rich emporium of Venetian commerce, and little, if at all, frequented by the Turks, Boucicault, in spite of the reclamations of the resident merchants, landed his troops, and indiscriminately plundered the factories both of Christian and Infidel. The whole line of Syrian coast was visited with similar lawless rapine; and the calm representations addressed by Zeno in the first instance were received with studied insult. "I wage no war with Venice," was the taunting and evasive reply of Boucicault: "that which I find in an enemy's territory I treat as the property of an enemy. If any harm has been done, I regret it; but the evil does not admit remedy." The remedy thus denied was discovered by the bravery of Zeno, who resolved to use force where remonstrance had failed. On the 6th of October both fleets anchored in sight of each other off the Island Sapienza, a spot once fatal to the Venetian arms; and there an engagement commenced at daybreak, which lasted, with great slaughter on both sides, during four hours. Zeno, although equal to his adversary in ships, was far inferior in men, nor was he well supported by his captains. His own galley for more than an hour was engaged singly against that of Boucicault and two more; one attacking his prow, the others each broadside. Melted pitch, sulphur, and live coals were thrown among the rigging, brine was cast in the mariners' eyes; and at length Boucicault, at the head of a band of French distinguished for their personal strength, attempted to board, protected by a ceaseless volley of javelins and arrows from the Genoese bowmen. Zeno himself, as he trod the deck in the full habiliments of command, was the chief object against which the fury of the combatants was

directed; while loudly calling on him by name, they swarmed up the side of the galley with fierce and menacing gestures.* By a bold, singular, and unexpected manœuvre the assault was checked. It had been made on the larboard quarter; and Zeno, after ordering the guns, ballast, and whatever other weighty material was at hand, to be rolled to starboard, commanded his crew, by a sudden impulse, to press downward on the same side also; thus elevating his vessel high above the boarders, and at the same time presenting his lower bank of oars as a palisade. By this means the enemy were for the most part prevented from scaling the rampart opposed to them; while the few who gained the deck, little able to keep their footing, rendered unsteady by the motion and the inclination of the ship, tottered, fell headlong, and were speedily slain. The pressure on the opposite quarter gave the Venetians there also an equal, though different advantage, by the presentation of their whole undivided force to the enemy; all attempt from the vessel at the prow was impossible during this manœuvre; and the three hostile galleys were at length beaten off, though not until Zeno himself was wounded, and his whole crew, with the exception of thirty, were disabled. At the close of the action three Genoese vessels were captured, and the remaining eight escaped with much loss and difficulty. One of the prizes was secured by a stratagem scarcely less extraordinary than that practised by Zeno himself. A Venetian storeship, crowding all sail upon her widely extended yardarms, bore down upon a Genoese galley; and the crew, when alongside, cutting all the ropes at the same moment, let fall every sail upon the enemy's deck, where the astonished mariners, struggling like birds in a net, were compelled to surrender.†

Zeno, with no less modesty in reporting than valour in obtaining this success, in his official despatch to the signory omitted all mention of his own wound. He claimed the victory to which he was justly entitled, and which his prizes indisputably evinced; and he added, that if his officers had

* P. Justiniani, lib. vi. p. 196.

† P. Justiniani, *ut sup.* In the saloon of the grand council was a picture, by Bassano, representing this stratagem. Sansovino *Venetia descritta*, lib. viii. p. 249; and Girolamo Bardi *Dichiaratione di tutte le Iстorie che si contengono nei quadri*, sec. p. 58, Ven. 1587.

fulfilled their duty, not one Genoese vessel would have been saved.* The haughty spirit of Boucicault could ill brook this publication of his disgrace ; and he replied in a long, hasty, and intemperate cartel, addressed both to the doge and to Zeno. In direct terms, according to the naked fashion of the times, he threw the lie in their teeth ;† and in order to establish his own contrary assertions, confiding, as he said, in Divine justice, in the blessed Mother of God, and in St. George, he challenged either of them to meet him in the lists, and offered his opponent considerable advantage of numbers. He would fight with five against six—ten against twelve—fifteen against eighteen—twenty against twenty-four; or, as a course which might better decide the question of naval superiority, he would meet galley against galley, his own being manned by none but Genoese and French, that of his enemy by none but威尼斯人.‡ The signory disregarded this idle gasconade ; and, content with the substantial evidence of facts, they pointed to the captured vessels which had been brought to port, and permitted the vanquished to prate about his victory.

An atrocious instance of cruelty, exhibiting a petty spirit of revenge most unworthy of a great nation, sullied the glory of this triumph. One of the prisoners, a Frenchman, irritated by defeat and groaning under captivity, expressed a hope that he might yet one day wash his hands in Venetian blood. The evil omen of the Barbarian, says the courtly native historian, grated on the ears of the senators, and with one voice they ordered the miserable offender to be hanged between the Red Columns.§ Sabellico neglects to add, that with a refinement of vengeance they instructed the executioner to gash the soles of the expiring victim's feet, in order that he might leave traces of his own blood on the pavement of the *Piazzetta*, and thus more distinctly mark the failure of his indiscreet aspiration.||

A few months of straggling hostilities succeeded the battle of Sapienza. France at first appeared willing to support the declarations of Boucicault ; and certain Venetian mer-

* The original despatch is given by Sanuto.

† Their letters, he said, were *mendaciss plenas et dolis—certe mirandum, licet mentiendi vestra consuetudo cognoscatur*, &c.

‡ *Stella Annales Genuenses*, ap. Muratori, xvii. 1992.

§ Sabellico, Decad. II. lib. viii.

|| Bembo, the continuator of the Chronicle of Dandolo, ap. Mur. xl. 518.

chants, attending the fair of Marseilles, were thrown into prison, and their effects confiscated. Some trading ships also in the Greek seas fell into the hands of the Genoese cruisers. But when Venice aroused herself, and appeared to be arming in earnest, she was met by submissions, and a negotiation terminated in peace, on the basis of mutual restitution and the payment of an indemnity to the Venetians for their losses at Berytus. One monument of this short war endured even to our own times. Timour, freed by their internal dissensions from the observation of the two European fleets, pressed his conquests among the fastnesses of Albania, where a petty tribe, the inhabitants of Parga, abandoned their ancient city, and took refuge on an impregnable rock in the sight of Corfu, to which they gave the name of their former settlement.

The neighbourhood of a Venetian garrison soon invited or compelled them to submit to the protection of the republic, under which, however, they maintained a more than nominal independence. The spirit which animated this noble-minded band remained in their descendants after a lapse of four centuries ; and the admiration which an Englishman cannot but profoundly cherish for their pure love of freedom is mingled with bitterness of feeling, when he brings to mind the causes which led to their second expatriation in 1819.

The death of Galeazzo Visconti was the signal for anarchy throughout the Milanese states. All the three sons among whom he had divided his power were minors, one of them was illegitimate, and the regency was administered by the widowed dutchess, Catarina of Visconti, a daughter of Bernabo. The council which assisted her was composed partly of personal favourites of the late duke, more distinguished for talent than for birth, partly of the ancient and powerful nobility ; and between these discordant interests reigned an ill-dissembled jealousy, which soon openly exhibited itself in deeds of violence and blood. The state-prison changed their inhabitants according to the predominance of either faction ; and Catarina, not sufficiently strong for the open exercise of authority, employed secret executions, and, it may be feared, yet darker means, to free herself from those whom she most dreaded. Every town throughout Lombardy was a prey to the petty tyranny of some noble,

who sought, amid the convulsions of his country, to establish in it a separate dominion. Of the neighbouring powers who might be expected to derive profit from these troubles, few were more to be feared, for none had a heavier debt of injury to repay, than Francesco da Carrara; and the dutchess early conciliated him by the promised cession of Feltre and Belluno. The Lord of Padua asked also for Vicenza; but through the mediation of Venice, he was content to withdraw this demand. The treaty, however, was violated by the Milanese at the time named for its completion; and Carrara, justly indignant at this new breach of faith, and having in vain appealed to the signory, from whom he received an ambiguous answer, invaded the Veronese, but was compelled to retire. In the following spring, he concerted an alliance with a prince who, though possessing neither treasure nor territory, advanced pretensions which might be usefully employed. Gulielmo della Scala laid claim to Verona, which had been wrested from his late father, Antonio; and he promised to return whatever assistance Carrara might afford him towards the recovery of his patrimony, by engaging its whole force, when at his disposal, in the projected attack upon Vicenza. The enterprise was successful; partly by secret communication with the inhabitants, partly by force of arms, the Paduans entered Verona, and proclaimed Della Scala its lord. Scarcely a fortnight, however, after his restoration, Gulielmo died of a disease with which he had been long afflicted; and so familiar was Italy with the poisoner's cup, so bitter was the hatred fostered by the enemies of Carrara, so necessary did their own crimes render it that they should endeavour to sully the memory of him upon whom they were perpetrated, that the death of his friend and ally has been repeatedly imputed to the Lord of Padua himself. If the loftiness of his general character, his frank, open, and undisguised bearing, his nobleness and generosity of spirit are not in themselves sufficient to disprove this detestable charge to our complete satisfaction, yet even those who judge men's actions by the more staid and measured rules of utility must consent to acquit him, unless they can discover an adequate motive for his guilt. His interests, on the contrary, demanded that this prince should live. Della Scala left two sons, who were immediately

invested with their father's inheritance ; and if Carrara had assassinated his tried and faithful partisan, he must have done so only that he might substitute in his place two unproved and inexperienced youths, who soon showed themselves unworthy of his confidence.*

This conquest of Verona had been undertaken without the approbation of Venice ; and before the attempt Carlo Zeno had been despatched to Padua, with instructions to mediate between the disputants. Carrara inflexibly replied that the fitting season was now come in which he might obtain satisfaction for his wrongs, and he refused to listen to the ambassador's representation that Venice had left far greater wrongs unrevenged. An evil omen was remarked as the prince mustered his troops in the palace-square of the captured city. He had delivered his great banner, bearing a red cross on a white ground, and quartered with the arms of Carrara, to the custody of one of his noblest officers ; and as the standard-bearer fixed the staff in the rest at his saddle-bow, it fell from his hands, while murmurs were heard among the spectators, " This is God's judgment !" † Undismayed by this omen, which seems to have deeply impressed his followers, Carrara directed his eldest son, Francesco Terzo, to march on Vicenza, having previously expressed his wish to the princes Della Scala that one of them would precede him ; but, little grateful for the important benefit recently conferred upon them, they refused obedience. When Francesco Terzo appeared before the walls, he was rudely handled in a skirmish, and compelled to withdraw to his camp, with a severe wound in the face. On the following morning loud shouts were heard from the city, mingled with the pealing of bells and the thunder of artillery. The banner of Milan was lowered, and the delighted eyes of the young Carrara imagined that he beheld the ensign of his own house unfurled in its place. The colours were very similar, and the distance was considerable ; but as a second standard rose over a nearer gate,

* See the authorities cited by Sismondi (lx.) on both sides. Sabellice (Dec. ii. lib. viii.) does not hesitate to charge Carrara with the murder of Della Scala's two sons, as well as of their father. But Sabellice wrote in fetters, and he had undertaken the impossible task of extenuating the guilt and infamy of his country.

† Andrea Gattaro, 680.

he despaired, with astonishment and mortification, the winged lion of St. Mark. Catarina had successfully negotiated with Venice; and Dal Verme, retaining all his deceased sovereign's hatred against Carrara, had prevailed upon the duchess to barter for the alliance of the signory by surrendering Vicenza to their protection; and, careless of the loss to his country, so as it did not confer benefit on the Paduans, he admitted a large Venetian force within the walls, and acknowledged their supremacy.

This iniquitous negotiation must be attributed in great measure to the ambition felt by the doge Steno, that his reign might be distinguished by an enlargement of territory; for although the Venetian government was seldom choice as to its means of acquisition, and the bribe offered was most alluring, yet the council hesitated till the Milanese advanced their biddings. Feltre and Belluno were added to Vicenza, and the bargain was finally struck by the surrender of the whole territory on this side the Adige. Even after these discussions there was not wanting in the council a feeling of justice and honour which, but for a stratagem of the doge, might have prevented the nefarious compact. He found a pretext to purge the assembly of all those nobles who were opposed to his design; yet even then the decision for which he struggled was at last confirmed by the majority of only a single voice.

The news of his unexpected disappointment was received by Francesco Novello with his customary evenness of temper. He handed the despatch which announced it to Brunone and Antonio della Scala, and with a brief remark—"Farewell to Vicenza! This arises from your refusal,"—he turned to some other business, while the perfidious youths lost no time in framing their own secret arrangements with Venice. In the camp before Vicenza, however, a widely different spirit was manifested. When a trumpet from the garrison announced that the city had surrendered itself to the protection of Venice, Francesco Terzo ordered him to retire, and not to return without a safe-conduct. On the evening of the same day, the messenger reappeared with the pennant of Vicenza, and in the name of Venice, commanded the Paduans to raise the siege and withdraw. Francesco denied his authority, pointed to the arms of Vicenza on his pennant, which, had he been an envoy of

the signory, would have borne their device ; and then, with angry menaces of summary punishment if he returned, he dismissed him unhurt. On the morrow, the same trumpet again sought the camp, bearing now a Venetian pennant, but still unprovided with a safe-conduct. The outposts, indignant at these repeated insults to their prince, hastily surrounded the messenger, put him to the sword, and threw his body into the city ditch. Francesco was displeased with the violence, but little anticipated the terrible vengeance with which it was to be repaid, and probably forgot the transaction as insignificant.*

The Lord of Padua immediately hastened in person to Vicenza, and gave orders for an assault on the very night of his arrival. Before, however, the troops were put in motion a Venetian courier placed in his hands a despatch bearing the leaden seal of the republic, which charged him, on pain of immediate war, to desist from his enterprise. He instantly countermanded the assault, and broke up, on the next morning, for Padua. Then having fully ascertained the treacherous intrigues which the two princes Della Scala were concerting with Venice, he threw them into confinement, and, proceeding with the Lady Taddea to Verona, he assumed its sovereignty in his own name, as a punishment for the ingratitude of the masters whom he had restored, and who had proved themselves undeserving. His chief wishes were now directed to an adjustment with Venice ; but the signory was implacable. They felt that Carrara was within their toils, and his destruction was resolved upon ; so that to his offer of holding all his territories in fee from the republic, they replied only by demanding indemnities which he had not power to furnish ; and they perpetually reverted to the murder of the trumpet, as having

* In relating this incident, we have followed the minute and precise narrative of Gataro (883), which bears with it strong marks of truth. Daru has adopted another statement most hostile to Francesco Novello, and has made *him* give orders for an outrage yet more cruel than the infliction of death—to cut off the nose and ears of the trumpet, and send him back with a declaration of war. Yet it is plain that Francesco Novello at the time was in Verona, not at Vicenza. Bembo, the continuator of the chronicle of Dandolo, vouches for this barbarous mutilation, but attributes it to Francesco Terzo, with the addition of a cruel, stupid, and unfeeling mockery,—“ Let us make from this trumpet the lion of St. Mark ! ” As the lion possessed both nose and ears, we are at a loss to discover the hidden point of this brutal jest.

placed him without the pale of international law. Even while his ambassadors were receiving audience, the doge gave orders to cut the embankment of the Anguillera in three places ; thus, by pouring destruction on his unoffending subjects, offering a foretaste of the bitterness with which their lord was to be visited. The envoys were dismissed, and the banner of St. Mark was raised on a bastion in the Paduan territory, which had been insulated by the inundation.

Francesco communicated to his great council the rejection of his proposals ; and that he might fall at least with dignity, he urged them to consent to war. His design was opposed by Galeazzo de' Gatari, the elder of the two chroniclers who have guided us through these passages of history. This faithful senator pointed to the miseries which Francesco Vecchio had brought down upon himself and his country, by rousing the unforgiving and unappeasable hatred of Venice. Peace, he said, ought to be secured, be the terms what they might ; for upon its conclusion depended the welfare or the ruin of Padua. This seasonable counsel was resisted, among others, by Amorato Pelliciaro, a rich merchant, who offered a thousand ducats towards defraying the expenses of war, and blindly prophesied that right must prevail. A brother senator applauded the rash speech, and compared the orator to that Crastinus who struck the first blow for Cæsar against Pompey in Thessaly ; "forgetting," as Gataro* touchingly winds up his vivid narrative of this debate, "the lines in which Lucan† curses that Crastinus as the cause of all the blood that was shed in the cruel war that followed. But to this opinion the signor inclined, and

* Andrea Gataro, 890.

*Dii tibi non mortem, quæ cunctis pœna paratur,
Sed sensum post fata tuæ dent, Crastine, morti !
Cujus torta manu commisit lancea bellum,
Primaque Thessaliam Romano sanguine tinxit.*
Pharsalia, vii. 470.

For him, ye gods, for Crastinus, whose spear,
With impious eagerness, began the war,
Some more than common punishment prepare !
Beyond the grave, long, lasting plagues ordain,
Surviving sense, and never-ceasing pain !

ROWE, vii. 697.

See also Cæsar, *De Bell. Civ.* iii. 91-92.

war was declared. Accursed be Amorato, the author of a measure which brought fast on the destruction of Padua, and the downfall of the noble house of Carrara!"

It was at midsummer that Carrara solemnly denounced war against Venice. His sole ally was Nicolo d'Este, Count of Ferrara, upon whom, terrified by the overwhelming force of his enemies, little reliance could be placed. The command of thirty thousand *condottieri* was intrusted, by the signory, to Malatesta of Pesaro, and Savello a Roman captain; and Carlo Zeno was attached to them as one of the *provveditori*. Carrara, after a successful incursion into the Trevisano, confined himself to the defensive, throwing up lines and constructing a series of intrenchments on its marshy frontiers; and one of these works appears to have struck the invaders with extreme wonder. In a few hours a ditch was formed of great depth, and thirty feet in width, surmounted by an impregnable rampart, at which the Venetians, we are told, gazed with astonishment, firmly believing it to have been effected by the Devil, and not by human engineers.* The muster of the Paduan forces within these lines, as described by Gataro, might afford a subject for a painter. "Every one seeming more eager than another, they presented themselves with their best equipments. They came with bright weapons, embroidered coats, and blazoned devices, indicating the antiquity of their families—with naked cuirasses, burnished and blazing like the sun—targets and ghiaverins—arbalists and bows—bombardels, lances, and shields. Their dear and much-loved lord, wearing an embroidered coat over his armour, glanced, with a proud and joyful eye, along the gallant line, and then inspected the men, squadron by squadron, showing a glad and gracious aspect, and addressing words of encouragement to them as he walked his horse slowly along."† Little, however, notwithstanding the natural strength of the country which they occupied, could be hoped from twelve thousand men, opposed to nearly thrice their number; and the activity of Zeno ere long found means to penetrate their lines. Undertaking a personal reconnaissance, on a September night, sometimes wading to his very shoulders, sometimes swimming in the marshes, he satisfied himself

* Andrea Gataro, 693.

† Ibid. 807.

that the passage, though difficult, was practicable.* When once assured that it was possible to effect it, he did not hesitate to make the attempt ; and the whole territory beyond the Brenta was speedily overrun in consequence of his success. Venice had three powerful armies in her pay ; her disbursements amounted to 120,000 ducats each month ; and, since the days of Frederic Barbarossa, such an assemblage of troops had never been seen in Italy.

This frontier line, however, was not maintained by the invaders without much bloodshed ; Savello was attacked and beaten back from it, and the chance of battle led him to a personal encounter with Francesco. Their lances were shivered at the first onset, and each swayed back to his horse's croup ; recovering themselves, they drew their swords, and Carrara, with a single blow, which descended to his antagonist's vizor, cleft the argent lion from his helmet. His own crest underwent the same fate ; but a second stroke dashed Savello's vizor into fragments, and, his sword being at the same time broken at the hilt, he was compelled to spur his horse to flight.† Malatesta, who was on ill terms with his brother-general, openly expressed satisfaction at this discomfiture ; and not long afterward, having incurred yet further suspicion by his imprudence, he was removed from his command, which was bestowed upon Savello.

The second line of defence presented obstacles not to be surmounted during this campaign, and the hostile armies occupied their winter-quarters towards the close of November. A bitter domestic sorrow awaited Carrara in the death of the Lady Taddea ; and while smarting under this blow, yet more grievous to him than the dangers of his principality, he received information that Savello had broken up from his cantonments, reoccupied his summer positions, and, in the very heart of December, guided to undefended passages by some peasants whom he had bribed, had established himself in the rich Piovado di Saceo, the granary of Lombardy. In an attempt to dislodge the invaders, Carrara was painfully wounded, and for a while obliged to withdraw from active command.

The arms of Padua had been no less unfortunate in the

* *Vita Caroli Zeni*, ap. Muratori, xix. 338.

† Andrea Gattaro, 600.

Veronese, where Francesco di Gonzaga, Lord of Mantua, and Giacopo dal Verme had gained most of the strongholds. The inhabitants of that district were ill affected to Carrara, and backward in his defence; and even in his own more immediate court and camp, treachery was undermining the small remnant of his power. The Venetian army, after Savello's defeat, had encamped at Nogara, where, by its losses and divisions, it was reduced to twelve thousand men, while Carrara had now no less than sixteen thousand at his disposal. The position also of the Venetians was hazardous; for, if the bank of the Brenta in their rear were cut, retreat became impossible, and Francesco, perceiving his advantage with a rapid eye, felt secure of victory. His wounds still kept him from the field, but he communicated his plans to Count Manfredi di Barbiano, to whom, jointly with Francesco Terzo, he delegated the command. The Paduans, high in hope and eager for battle, marched for Nogara, which they reached on Christmas eve, when the generals despatched a trumpet bearing their gauntlets of defiance as a challenge to Savello for combat on the morrow. The news of his acceptance was received with shouts of joy. Late in the evening, however, a messenger on horseback arrived from the Venetian camp, laden with presents from Savello to Manfredi. They were such as the courtesy of war occasionally interchanges, luxuries for the table; four large geese *unplucked*,* some watermelons, and a few flasks of Malvoisie, and, but for the message which accompanied them and the subsequent conduct of Manfredi, they would not have occasioned suspicion. The bearer significantly repeated to the count the instructions with which he had been charged, "that he should not eat the feathers." Manfredi smiled, and accepted the presents, within which it was afterward believed twelve thousand ducats were concealed. At daybreak, when Francesco Terzo was marshalling his line, Manfredi refused to take the field, and commenced a retreat. On his appearance at Padua, Carrara, who felt no doubt of his treachery, spared his life, but stripped him of his command, and sentenced him to banishment.

The new year witnessed the defection of Nicolo of Fer-

* *Oche del Piccado—con le penne tutte morte.*—Andrea Gattari, 811.

rara. His capital was suffering from scarcity, he was pressed on all sides by the Venetian forces, and his subjects were so unfriendly to the cause which he had espoused, that he had reason to fear even for his life. He concluded, therefore, a separate treaty, the chief terms of which involved the surrender of Polesina di Rovigo, and the dismantling of his fortresses. The haughty republic added one other condition more degrading to the dignity of a sovereign—that he should repair to Venice in order to solicit pardon from the doge, and to swear that he would deny all succour for the future to the Lord of Padua. This compulsory desertion by his son-in-law was to Carrara more a subject of regret than of complaint; but the treachery of a much nearer connexion awakened his indignation as well as his sorrow. His half-brother, Giacomo, the former companion of his many dangers, had been seduced by the Venetians to betray Padua into their hands, on condition of enjoying the whole property of the signor and the pillage of ten of the wealthiest houses, of being presented with a palace at Venice, being enrolled a member of the grand council, and receiving a payment of ten thousand ducats. His sons, bitterly distracted by filial affection on the one hand, and paramount duty to their country on the other, while they denounced this conspiracy, stipulated for their father's life. The criminal denied his guilt till confession was extorted by the rack; and on committal to the Giants' Tower, stung by remorse, or by apprehension of a painful and ignominious death, he suffocated himself by the smoke of some straw with which his dungeon was provided. His accomplices were carried, riding backward upon asses, to the place of execution, where they were hanged, each by one foot to the gibbet, and left to perish in torture.

Disasters now thickened apace on all sides, and no hope of assistance remained to Carrara, unless from the Florentines, who still promised their succour as soon as they should be disengaged from war with Pisa. As the invaders approached nearer to his capital, Carrara intrusted his two younger sons, Ubertino and Marsilio, and other branches of his family, with the larger portion of his treasure and jewels, to the protection of these ancient allies. Francesco Terzo ably and valorously seconded him in the capital

while Giacomo, his second son, commanded at Verona; and having secured the most defenceless of those dear to him in their asylum at Florence, Carrara himself boldly confronted the peril which was now hourly increasing, since Savello had advanced to the very walls of Padua, and closely invested it on the twelfth of June.

Verona was still pressed by Gonzaga of Mantua and Giacopo dal Verme; and the citizens, without attachment to their present governors, in order to escape the terrors of an assault, surrendered by capitulation. A safe-conduct was accorded to Giacomo, with which he secured the retreat of his lady, Madonna Belfiore. For himself, disappointed in the return of a messenger whom he despatched to Padua, and apprehensive that his father had refused to confirm the treaty, he attempted to escape by night. Though disguised, he was recognised by some peasants, who delivered him to the *provveditori*, and by them he was immediately sent under a strong escort to Venice, where on his arrival he was thrown into the prison of San Giorgio.

Verona having fallen, the blockading army was disengaged, and joined the division before Padua, where, in addition to the other miseries of a siege, pestilence had commenced its ravages. While the enemy continued to spread devastation over the open country, the neighbouring villagers flocked within the walls in order to seek protection; and anxious to preserve such property as they could carry off, they were accompanied by large herds of cattle. A mixed throng of beasts and men crowded and exhausted the city, so that not only every house overflowed with inhabitants, but the churches, monasteries, and public magazines were choked with countless swarms, while the porches and arcades of the open streets afforded a scanty shelter to multitudes otherwise wholly unprovided. Food was soon wanting for this overgrown population. The cattle first began to die for want of fodder; and the wretched fugitives, pent within limits far too contracted for their numbers, worn by fatigue, weakened by hunger, poisoned by the foul exhalations steaming from the corruption which surrounded them, contracted and propagated a frightful disease.* An acute fever, attended with the plague-spot and

* Gataro, from whom we are borrowing, might be supposed to write with Livy before his eyes. *Grave tempus et fortis annus pestilens erat*

tumour, was generally fatal in three days at furthest. The deaths varied from three hundred to five hundred in each day, and, as appeared from a register kept in the episcopal palace, more than forty thousand individuals perished between the end of June and the middle of August. Among the victims of this mortality are noticed the elder of the two Gataro and Alda da Gonzaga, the consort of Francesco Terzo. The princess was interred with as much pomp as the season of misery permitted. But the mode of burial which the chronicler describes as adopted for the many sufficiently avouches the horrors to which the Paduans were subjected, and cannot fail to bring to mind the like practice which prevailed among ourselves when London was last exposed to a similar calamitous visitation. No one who has read the vivid pages of De Foe can have forgotten the daily gatherings of the dead from house to house, which he so distressingly narrates ; and though the texture of that singular writer's palmary work is fictitious, the materials from which it is woven are confessedly trustworthy. Every morning, says Gataro, cars went round to receive the dead, and in every car were placed from sixteen to twenty corpses. A crucifix and lantern were fixed on the pole in front, and each car was attended by a priest. Deep trenches were opened in the burying-grounds of the churches, and into them the corpses were thrown and covered with earth. Since the destruction of Jerusalem and the fall of Troy, adds this eyewitness, never was any city in the world so overwhelmed as the unfortunate Padua.*

The contagion, as may be supposed, was not wholly confined to the city ; it penetrated to the Venetian camp : but more open quarters and ampler supplies disarmed it there of much of its deadly power, so that not a day passed without an assault, and the two Carrara were ever foremost where danger summoned. Even in this their extremity, they secured an interest in the besieging army, and Venetians were found sufficiently blinded by the love of gain to

*urbi agriisque, nec hominibus magis quam pecori ; et auxere vim morbi
terrore populationis pecoribus agrestibusque in urbem acceptis. Ea
conluvio mixtorum omnis generis animantium et odore insolito urbanos,
et agrestem confutum in arca tecta, astu et vigilii angebat, ministeria
que invicem ac contagia ipsa vulgabant morbos (lli. 6).*

* Andrea Gataro, 922.

hold treacherous communication with the falling princes. By means of billets fastened to the heads of arrows, and shot within the walls, intelligence was daily forwarded to them. The traitors were discovered; two of them were priests; and as if in imitation or in refinement upon that death of lingering horror which the Romans inflicted, when called to punish those whom they esteemed the most holy among their ministers of religion, these miserable criminals, having been conveyed to Venice, were buried alive, with their heads downwards, between the fatal columns.

Terms at length were proposed by Zeno, though indirectly, and without the authority of the senate, to which Carrara appeared inclined to consent, and the *provveditore* withdrew to Venice that he might obtain full powers for negotiation. Discipline became remiss in the camp during his absence, and Carrara seized the opportunity as favourable for a sortie. It was his last feat of arms in the open field, and never had he been more proudly triumphant. At the head of fifty men, on the first dawn of the 17th of August, he issued from the Santa Croce gate, and found the outposts unsentinelled and the whole camp buried in slumber. To fire the nearest tents, to put the sleepers and the fugitives to the sword, was the work of a few minutes; and as the flames spread widely and furiously, a strong reserve poured in upon the terror-stricken and unresisting victims. The glare of the burning camp, however, aroused a division quartered at Moncelise, and that detachment, together with such troops as Savello could rally, at length made a stand. But ere this Carrara's object was fully gained, and he retired in good order within the city, after having inflicted severe loss upon his enemy, and gained for himself a valuable booty. The standard of St. Mark was captured, and the damage sustained by the Venetians was estimated at not less than one hundred thousand ducats. Savello received a wound which not long afterward proved mortal, and a truce of ten days was required for the burial of the dead.

That truce was yet further prolonged on the return of Zeno, who learned with surprise the disasters which had been suffered during his absence. He invited the signor to a conference, and "having touched hands and saluted," they sat down on the bank of the Brenta, and continued in

long debate. The Venetians offered to release Giacomo da Carrara, to present the signor himself with sixty thousand ducats and thirty cars laden with his private property, and to allow their free transport to any spot he might select. When Francesco asked permission to consult his citizens before he returned a final answer, Zeno jumped up, and said to him, with a familiar tone and action,* "Signor, if by this time to-morrow you shall not have put me in possession of Padua, you need have no hope of peace with Venice, and by the faith of a true knight I swear to be ever after your deadly foe." This warning was unhappily thrown away. Resisting the advice of his council, and lending a more willing ear to a flattering despatch which at the moment he received from Florence, and which urged him to hold out by the promise of speedy succour,—through the fatality, says Gataro, which seemed to attend the house of Carrara to its destruction, he refused the terms, and prepared anew for defence.

One by one his few remaining castles were gained by force or fraud, till Galeazzo^t of Mantua assumed the command before Padua, and on the 2d of November attempted to storm. He was repulsed at all points, himself received three lance-thrusts and was forced headlong from the rampart, at a spot at which Francesco was personally engaged, and not improbably, as it seems, by his very hand. Bembo also, one of the *provveditori*, was wounded; and although a breach was effected by the pioneers, the scaling ladders and engines were abandoned, and the assailants retired with loss and in confusion. To remove this disgrace, and to bring the siege to a close, new engineers were despatched from Venice, but their approaches were skilfully met by counter-works wherever they were attempted. Opposite to a covered way directed to the Gate de' Lioni, Francesco drew a deep ditch within the wall, and raised a strong mound parallel to it, himself, his son, and the chief nobles assisting to carry earth. The besiegers, irritated by the obstinacy of this protracted defence, menaced the citizens with extermination, and discharged *viretoni*[†] within the

* Allora Messer Carlo Zeno si levò in piedi e press il signore nel petto, e crollandogli le vesti disse.—Andrea Gataro, 926.

^t See the Note at the end of the Chapter.

[†] Lat. *verutum*, a short spittile (*veru*) spear or arrow.

walls, laden with messages of terror. Ten days were allowed for their ultimatum, and if, at the close of that period, they still continued to resist, it was announced that every thing should be ravaged by fire and sword, and that the fate of Zara and of Candia should be renewed in that of Padua.

The middle of November had arrived, and Francesco Terzo, hopeless of further contest, urged his father to capitulate ; but the signor spoke of aid from France and Hungary, of a thousand lances already on their march under the count his brother, and of a fleet which Genoa was equipping. In his heart he had no real expectation but from Florence ; and the citizens, little deceived by these glittering prospects, at length showed symptoms of insubordination. Seed-time had been lost ; their live-stock was destroyed ; their country was a desert. They appeared in arms before the palace, and there extorted a promise from their signor, that unless some of the great changes which he foreboded should take place within ten days, it should then be peace or war at their pleasure. They were much gratified with this assurance, says the chronicler, and lovingly took leave and withdrew. Not all, however, were thus contented ; for, on the night which succeeded, the Santa Croce gate was betrayed by its sentinels, and the first act of the Venetians upon entering was to put to the sword the traitors who admitted them. Carrara, roused by the tumult, flew to attempt the recovery of the gate, whence, overpowered by numbers, he retired contesting every street, and endeavouring to gain time so that the inhabitants might throw themselves into the strong fortification of their innermost precinct. The tocsin rang to arms ; few, however, obeyed the summons, or, if they did so, it was to save their property, not to second their prince. After the most gallant and unavailing efforts, Carrara, perceiving himself abandoned, demanded a safe-conduct to the camp, where he was received by Galeazzo and the *provveditori*. With grave and stately courtesy, they listened to the expression of his wish to submit, and his inquiry as to conditions, and then replied that they were not invested with power to ratify a treaty, but that they would accept the surrender, and ascertain the pleasure of the signory. It was with difficulty that Francesco restrained his mounting indignation as he rose to withdraw, saying that his defences were still

good, and that he would throw himself into the citadel. In return, it was proposed to him that he should provisionally resign the whole city and its fortresses into the hands of the *provveditori*, while he negotiated with Venice. He hesitated a few moments, and then turning to Galeazzo, addressed him : " Captain, it is into *your* hands that I will instantly surrender my city and my castle, if you will promise upon knightly faith and honour to restore them as you receive them, if I fail in coming to accord with the signory." Galeazzo gave the desired pledge, and Carrara returned to Padua to select his ambassadors, eight of whom were named by the burghers, two by himself. On their arrival at Venice, the former were admitted, the latter were refused audience by the doge. Great pains were taken to separate the interests of the citizens from those of their lord, and the reservation of their privileges was tendered if they would but treat independently of Carrara.

The prince, meantime, in full confidence of security, returned to the camp, and partook with Galeazzo of a soldier's board, at which Mestre was appointed as the place of conference with the ambassadors on the following day. On that day, however, Padua was occupied, contrary to the express stipulation of her lord, by Venetian troops, and the keys and ensigns of authority were delivered, not to Galeazzo, but to the *provveditori*. The citizens appeared careless of the change ; yet if, worn down by misery, they had lost their attachment to Carrara, they at least testified no joy at the accession of their new masters. Carrara too late perceived that he was betrayed, and appealed to Gonzaga for the fulfilment of his pledge. That pledge was renewed ; the Mantuan assured him afresh of protection, and of the restoration of his city if the treaty should be rejected. He vaunted the generosity of the signory, and proposed to accompany the prince and his son to Venice. Earnestly did Francesco Terzo protest against this perilous step. Better would it be, he said, to shut themselves up in their castle, and set fire to it with their own hands, than thus tamely to bare their throats to the knife of their butchers. " Father, if we go, we go to certain death ; nevertheless, you gave me life, and my obedience is always due to you."* With-

* Andrea Gataro, 987.

out means of resistance, and either unwilling to mistrust that honour to which he had confided, or totally unapprehensive of the atrocity which the signory meditated, Carrara signified his assent to Galeazzo's proposition. The voyage might have awakened suspicion of their fate; for they were conveyed in a covered boat, under a numerous guard, and on landing at San Giorgio, where they passed the night, they were received by the infuriated populace with deafening shouts of "Death to Carrara!" Galeazzo left them on the following morning, in order that he might intercede with the signory; but his efforts were unavailing, and he never returned. It is probable that he was sincere; that he deeply felt the stain cast upon his honour by the violation of faith into which he had been entrapped, and that he either testified resentment which brought down upon him the secret vengeance of a government to which forgiveness was unknown, or fell the victim of remorse and a deeply wounded spirit. He survived but a short time after this transaction.*

Amid the yells of the rabble, Carrara and his son were led to the hall of the great council, where they knelt before the feet of the doge. Steno, after a pause, raised and seated them, one on each side of his throne. He then reminded them of the deep obligations of their house to Venice, and of the evil return which they had offered; and his reproaches were received submissively, and answered only by entreaty. They were remanded to San Giorgio, and confined during the deliberation of the council, in which banishment to Cyprus or Candia, imprisonment on those islands, or in the state dungeons of the capital, were severally proposcd. For the present, it was determined that they should be placed in a cage;† and some deference was shown to their station by the assignment of a servant and six gen-

* See the supplementary Note at the end of the Chapter. Gataro has little respect for the fidelity of Galeazzo: he bursts out against him in the following impassioned words. *Oh fede veramente canina di Galeazzo da Mantoua, e traditrici promesse fatte a rovina e sradicazione della nobilissima casa da Carrara!* 937.

† *Conclusero di far fare una gabbia sopra la Sala che è in Torresella, e ivi mettere il signore e i figliuoli, e che ogni giorno andassero sei Gentiluomini a stare con loro, e dar loro un famiglio che gli servisse, e si fatta provisone che honoratamente potessero vivere.*—Andrea Gataro, 938.

lemen as constant attendants. Meantime, during the requisite preparations, they were transferred to the prisons adjoining the ducal palace ; and in that gloomy abode the signor found Giacomo, his second son, who had been in captivity for five months, and who was ignorant of the further disasters of his family. The interview was inexpressibly touching. They were permitted to remain together for a few days, and were then placed in separate cells.

A month had passed, and the fate of the prisoners appeared still undecided. The Venetians hesitated to consummate their crime ; and willing, probably, to divide its infamy with another, they seized the opportunity afforded them by the arrival of Giacopo dal Verme, the bitterest enemy of the house of Carrara. He presented himself before the Council of X., and declaimed at great length against the captive princes. They had already, he said, been once de-throned ; but they had arisen again to greater power than before. Their talents, their energy, their hereditary animosity to Venice, the devotion of their subjects, sufficiently avouched by the great sufferings which they had recently endured with scarcely a murmur, thirty years of mutual injuries—all these were adduced as furnishing so many reasons of state for their destruction. Imprisonment was but a weak and futile provision ; and the grave was the only cell in which the republic could immure such prisoners with safety. The X. gladly consented to the reasonings of Dal Verme, and on the 17th of January, Frate Benedetto, a faithful servant of God, who had frequently acted as confessor to the elder Carrara, was instructed to announce the sentence. The signor performed his devotions, confessed, and received the Eucharist ; and when the priest withdrew, two members of the Council of X., two others of the XL., a wretch named Bernardo de' Priuli, as chief executioner, and twenty assistants entered the cell. Unwilling to fall tamely, and disclaiming the authority which had condemned him, the prince seized a stool, the sole furniture of his chamber, and for a while successfully defended himself, till the tragedy of Pomfret* in our own history was renewed in his person. Overpowered by numbers, he was stricken down ; and Priuli, standing over him till he ex-

* Richard II.

A. D.
1406.

pired, strangled him with a bowstring. On the following day the sons were prepared for their fate by the same holy messenger who had performed the sad office to their parent. They embraced and parted tenderly. Francesco was first led out to the cell which had been occupied by his father, and strangled on the same spot by the same hand. The executioner then returned to Giacomo : with a hollow voice he asked if the deed was done, commanded himself to Heaven, and sought permission to write to his lady, Belfiore. The youth, and the firm, though gentle, bearing of their last victim might have wrung pity from any hearts but those of Venetian senators. "He was in his twenty-sixth year," says Gataro, "tall, and as handsome a cavalier as any in Lombardy, fair, like his mother, thoughtful, mild-tempered, and a lover of God ; his address was uncommonly sweet and winning, his air angelic. Yet was he high-spirited, active, and brave. If he had lived he would have been another Scipio Africanus."* Having finished his brief letter, he knelt ; and while repeating "Lord, into thy hands I commend my spirit," he was strangled by Priuli.

The bodies of the young princes were thrown into a boat, and conveyed to the church of San Marco Baccallare, where they were interred carelessly without any rites of sepulture ; that of Francesco himself received a mockery of funeral honours. Habited, like his deceased father, in a rich suit of Alexandrian velvet, his sword girt round his waist, and his golden spurs upon his heels, he was conveyed to San Stefano. A stone in the cloister of that church, without an inscription, but marked with a singular device,† denotes the resting place of the last and murdered Lord of Padua.‡

* See also Andrea de Redustis, ap. Muratori, xix. 818.

†  Can this be interpreted PATAVINVS? It is said in the later editions of the *Forestier Illuminato* to mean *Pro norma Tyrannorum*, to which words no very distinct meaning appears to be attached.

‡ The family name of Carrara, like that of the Scottish Macgregors, was proscribed. A branch of the house which still exists, or did exist not long ago, at Padua, was compelled to adopt the name of Pappa-fava (*L'Art de Vérifier les Dates*, iii. 665), a sobriquet, the origin of which has been traced as follows by Gataro (ap. Mur. xvii. 35). Marsilietto da Carrara, Signor of Padua for one short month before his assassination, in 1343, when a boy, was lodged, during a pestilence which raged in the capital, in a monastery at Brondolo. "Now in all the great religious houses it is an ancient custom to have vegetable broth at dinner every

The vengeance of the republic, though glutted with blood, was still unsatiated. There yet remained two sons of Francesco, who had eluded her deadly grasp, and a price was set upon their heads. Four thousand florins were offered to any one who would deliver either of them alive to the signory ; three thousand to him who would assassinate them. Yet, in spite of this proscription, Ubertino, the elder, died a natural death at Florence, in 1407, and thirty years must elapse from the events which we are now considering, before, in the more violent fate of Marsilio, we terminate the history of the injured and illustrious line of Carrara.

day of the week. On Monday it is made of beans (*fave*), on Tuesday of haricots, on Wednesday of chick-pease, and so on. Marsilietto was so fond of beans that it always appeared a thousand years to him till the Monday came round ; and when it did, he devoured the beans with such delight as was a pleasure to behold. He was therefore nicknamed *Pappa-fava* (Bean-glutton) by the rest, and his descendants have retained the name."

D d 2

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE

To page 311.

I have retained the name Galeazzo in deference to the general voice of historians, ancient and modern; nevertheless I feel a strong conviction that it was Francesco di Gonzaga, Lord of Mantua, and not his general, Galeazzo, who commanded before Padua, and to whom Carrara surrendered. All authorities agree that Francesco, jointly with Giacopo dal Verne, commanded at the siege of Verona, and that, after the surrender of that city, they both marched to unite themselves with Savello at Padua. The first mention of Galeazzo occurs after the death of Savello; and he is then made the chief actor in the subsequent transactions. Sabellico, a writer of far more elegance than accuracy, shows that even in his time there was a doubt respecting the name. "Galeacius Grumellus Mantuanus illi in imperium, decreto patrum, successit. Quidam auctores non Grumellum sed Gonzagam, ac Francisci principis fratrem eum fuisse tradunt!" (Dec. II. lib. viii. p. 432). Laugier, Sismondi, and Daru adopt Galeazzo, in silence. The learned authors of *L'Art de Vérifier les Dates* do not hesitate to substitute Francesco di Gonzaga. Francois de Gonzague avoit engagé Francois Carrara à se rendre à Venise pour traiter en personne ses intérêts avec le doge, l'assurant qu'il y seroit en toute sûreté. Il fut en conséquence très affligé de voir les Vénétiens arrêter Francois Carrara et le faire périr cruellement dans sa prison, ainsi que ses enfans (iii. 665).

The most important early testimony in favour of Francesco di Gonzaga is that of Mario Equicola, who wrote within a century of the tragedy of Carrara; and who, from his connexion with the Mantuan court (he was secretary to Isabella d'Este, consort of Giovanni Francesco II., Marquis of Mantua), must have possessed authentic information. In his *Commentari Mantouani* occurs the following passage: *Paolo Savello, Barone Romano, fu eletto all' impresa di espugnar Padoua. Il Gonzaga fu preposto contra Verona, la quale era difesa da Giacopo Carrara, figliuolo di Francesco il giovane.* L'Aliprandi scrive che il Gonzaga ebbe Verona per li Venetiani, e che detto Giacopo fuggendo fu fatto prigione ad Hostiglia e mandato in Venetia, ilche fu allo 23 di Giugno, 1403, e l'anno seguente i predetti Venetiani hebbero Padoua parimente con gli auspicii del loro Capitano Francesco Gonzaga. Donato de' Preti, la diligenza del quale fu grande in iscrivere le cose de' suoi tempi, il Platina nella *Vita d' Innocenzo VII.*, e Giovan Filippo nel suppimento, nominano Francesco Gonzaga in quella impresa secondo la verità. M. A. Sabellico nomina un Galeazzo Grumello Mantuano, e dubita se il Gonzaga il Grumello fosse sostituito in luogo di Paolo Savello; et affirma il Gonzaga essere fratello del Pren:ipe di Mantoua Francesco, ilche me pare un sogno: benchè anchè il Corio dica Galeazzo Gonzaga, dopo la morte di Paolo Savello haver havuta la cura dell' esercito ch' era contra Padoua. After recounting the murder of Carrara, Equicola continues, *Onde il Gonzaga ritorno non molto sodisfatto di quel senato, perciòché, come dicono, havea essortato il Carrara ad andare in Venetia, e ivi col Duca trattar le cose sue; promettendogli che liberamente andarebbe, e sicuro tornarebbe, se non trovasse conditione d'*

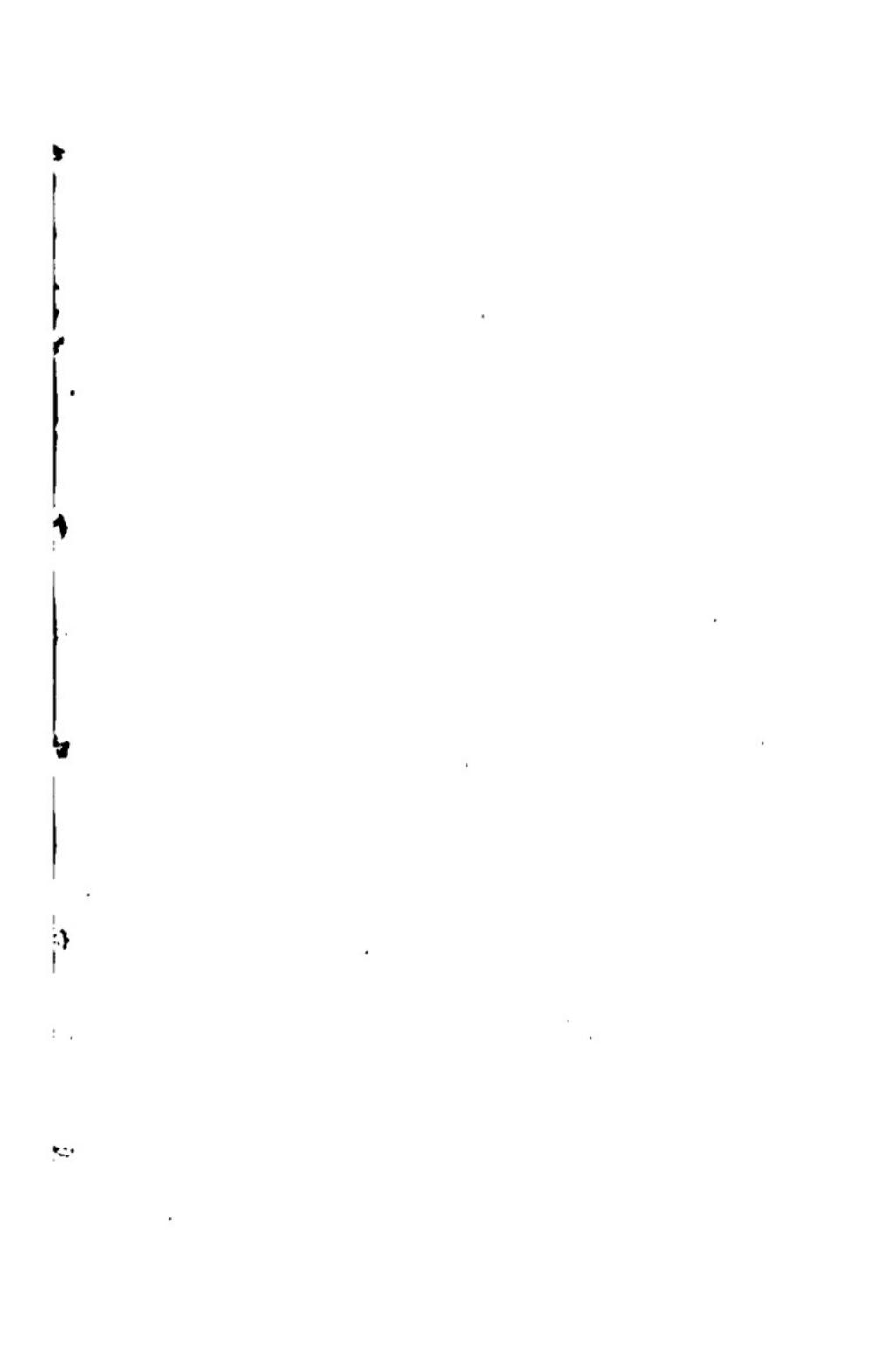
accordo, e che le cose sarebbono restate nello stato ch' egli le lasciava, delche nulla fu da Venetiani osservata (lib. li. p. 127).

Galeazzo was killed at the siege of Trecco, in May, 1406 (Sanuto 834), a death which affords no room for the suspicion which we have adopted, in the text, from Sismondi. *Il ressentir et manifesta peut-être d'une manière provoquante sa profonde indignation pour l'abus coupable qu'on faisoit de sa parole ; le sénat ne souffroit pas volontiers les reproches de ses gens de guerre et Galeaz mourut au bout de peu de semaines* (ch. lxx. p. 123). Francesco di Gonzaga died in March, 1407. His character, as represented by Equicola from Poggio, is that of a man deeply sensitive on points of honour, and who would, therefore, suffer most acutely from the recollection of the base and cruel deed in which he had been made an involuntary tool. *Huomo savio, e che piu stima facea della fede data et del giuramento, che di niun' altra cosa offertagli* (128).

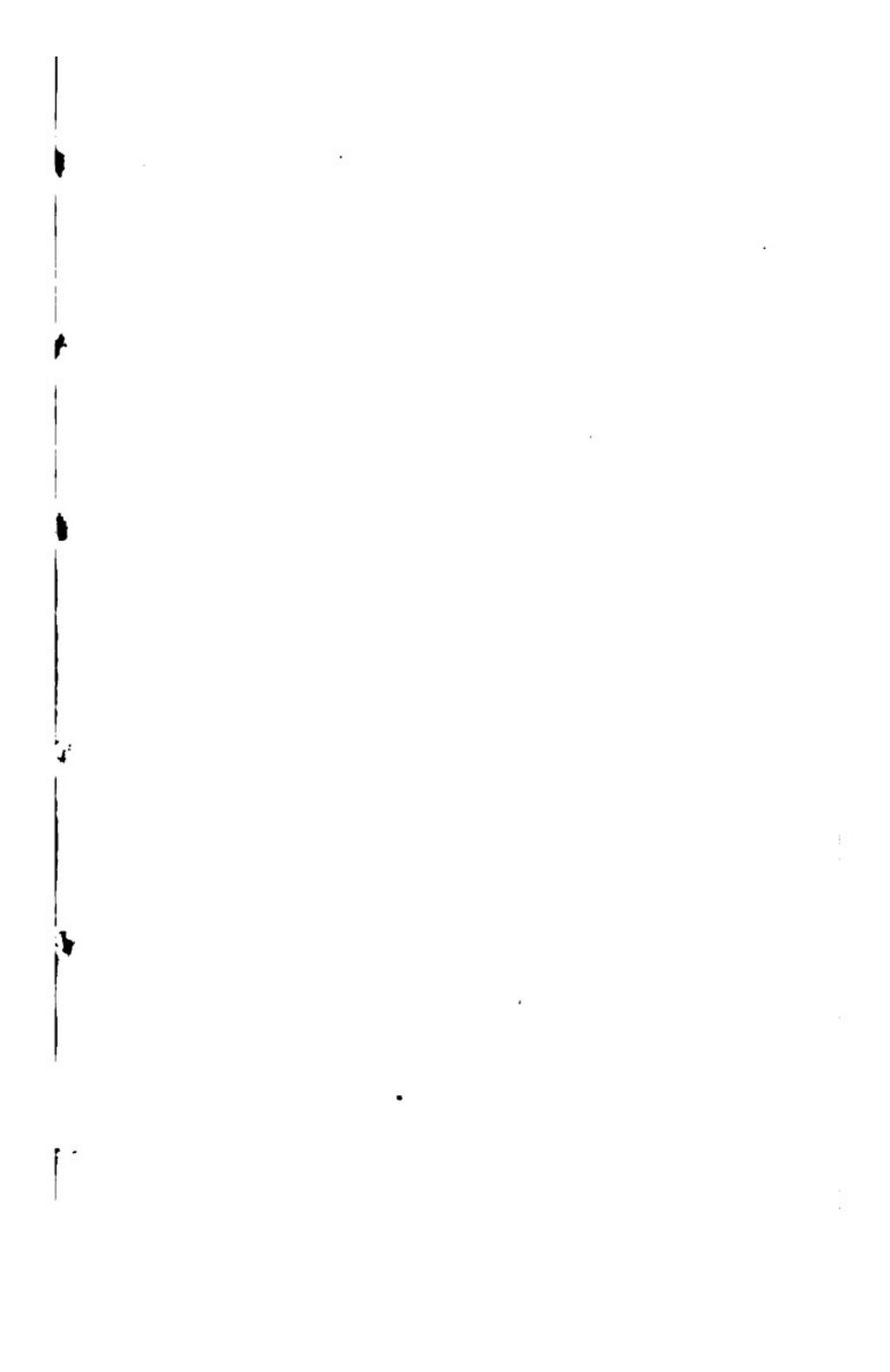
It is not probable that Carrara would have relied upon the protection of a subordinate Mantuan rather than that of Carlo Zeno. On the other hand, if the Prince of Mantua were himself present, there is good reason why he should be selected. The Lord of Padua might prefer offering his submission to the Lord of Mantua rather than to a Venetian *provveditore*; but surely he would choose the first delegate of a powerful republic, and that delegate the most renowned warrior of his time, before the military representative of the chief of a petty district.

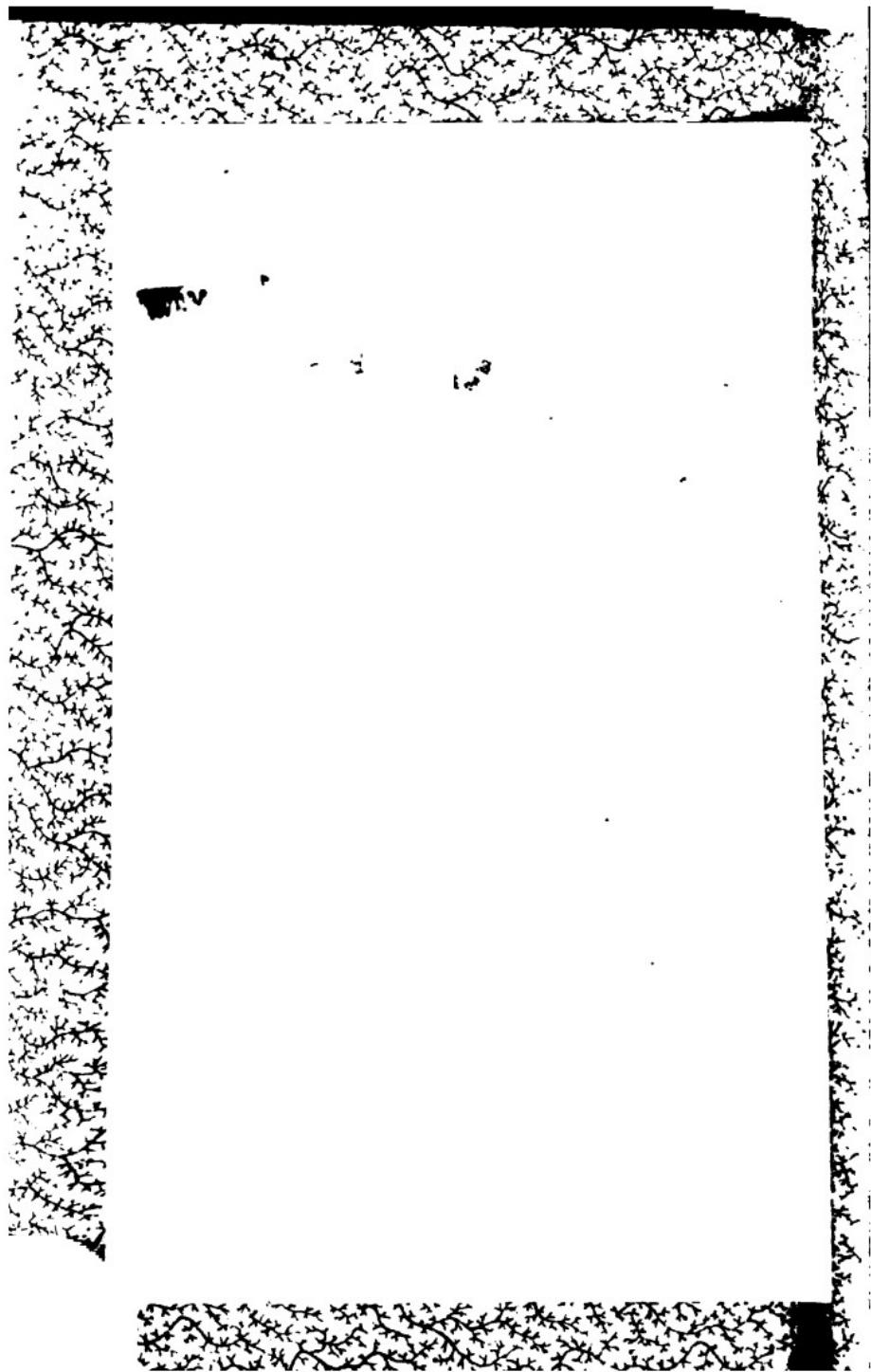
Two remarkable single combats, in which this Galeazzo was engaged, are recorded in the *Chronicon Tarvisinum* of Andrea de Radusii. One was fought in France with a gigantic Englishman, whom the chronicler names *Rubinus Novellus* (Robin Newman?). This champion had already been seven times victor in similar combats, and no Frenchman could be found who would accept his challenge. The two knights entered the lists on foot; and Novellus, who bore a huge iron battle-axe, swung it round his head with the most terrific force; but Galeazzo avoided the blow by springing aside with great agility as it descended, and jumping upon his antagonist while he was again endeavouring once more to raise his ponderous weapon, felled him by a single stroke on the back of the head. At the entreaty of the King of France he spared his prisoner's life, and received, in consequence, a pension of six hundred golden ducats from the royal bounty. The second duel occurred at Padua in the presence of many noble Venetians. It was fought, as we imagine, with the Marechal de Boucicault (*Bucicallus Francigena*), but it terminated by the interference of the judges of the field, without bloodshed, or the assignment of victory to either party (*ap. Murat* xix. 815).

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